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WASHINGTON'S Farewell Address

WEBSTER'S The Bunker Hill Monument

LINCOLN'S Gettysburg Speech

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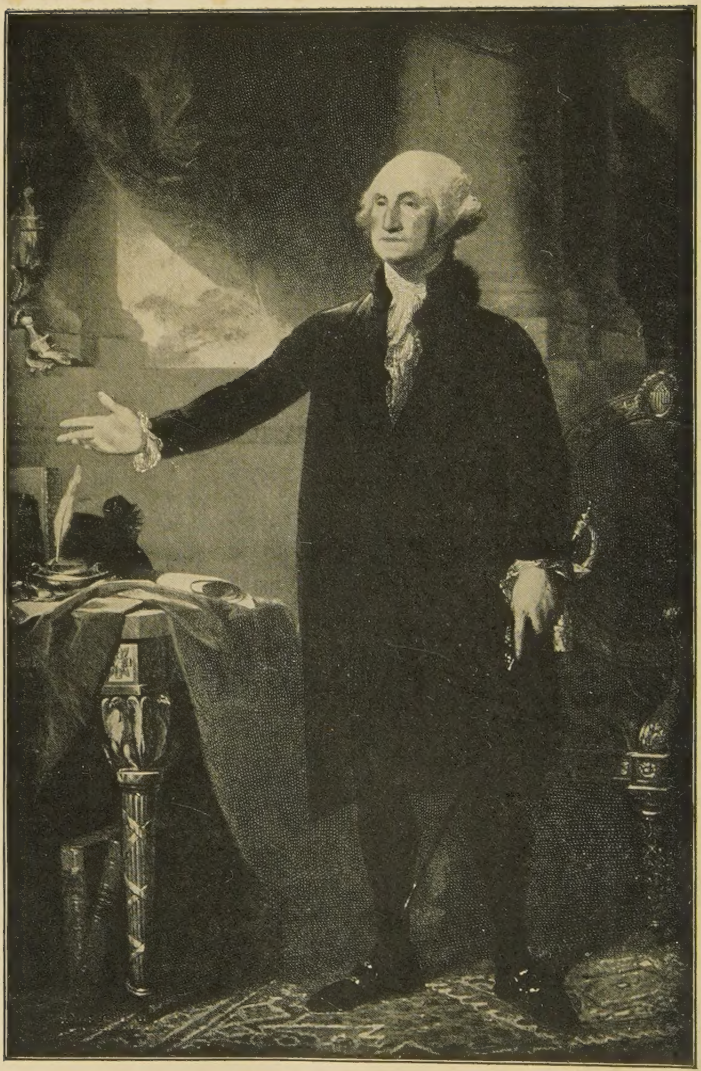

GEORGE WASHINGTON

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The Riverside Literature Series

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

WEBSTER'S FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION

AND

LINCOLN'S ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · DALLAS
SAN FRANCISCO

The Riverside Press Cambridge

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U . S . A

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GEORGE WASHINGTON

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

1732–1799

THE story of the life of George Washington is the proud possession of every American boy. All the outward events of that wonderful career the young hero-worshipper can recount, from the breaking-in of the pet colt somewhere about 1738 on the lawn of the Virginian plantation to the taking of the oath of office as President in New York in 1789. He knows by heart the exciting adventures of the young Washington during his three years' survey of the Virginian wilderness; he admires the Major Washington who so gallantly bore the commission of Governor Dinwiddie to warn the French off the Ohio lands and afterward saved the army of the obstinate Braddock from total defeat in the fight for Fort Duquesne. He knows how his hero resented the Stamp Act, and stood unflinchingly for justice in the Continental Congress; how he was elected Commander-in-Chief of the army and came to Cambridge to receive its leadership under the elm which still bears his name. He sees Washington, and little else, in every event of the war which followed: his strategy in compelling the British to evacuate Boston; his dignity in that enforced retreat across New Jersey; his genius in the Christmas victory at Trenton; his control in holding together his unpaid, half-fed soldiers; his patience in enduring criticism of his "Fabian" policy; his fortitude in braving the winter at Valley Forge; his joy in the loyalty of Lafayette; his grief at the faithlessness of Arnold; his righteous indignation at the general who lost for him the battle of Monmouth, — all these reaching a glorious climax in his magnificent dash across country in October of 1781 to wedge in Cornwallis at Yorktown and

force him to surrender. Through the quieter years that followed Washington is still the boy's hero, — as he presides over the convention of 1787 and helps draw up the constitution; as he enters upon the presidency; and as, about to assume again reluctant command of the army should war with France break out, he dies suddenly at his home at Mount Vernon in 1799.

But this military and civil career, thrilling as it is to the American boy, shows by no means the whole of the greatness of Washington. It is the man who thought and wrote who is of particular interest when the more mature student approaches one of his addresses as a piece of literature. Like most heroes of action, Washington was a man of few words; nor did he write much in his life outside the methodical keeping of diaries and accounts, the penning of ceremonious letters, and the composition of such speeches as his part in public affairs demanded of him. The style of these is uniformly concise, dignified, formal; and to read them is to enjoy a prose whose beauty lies in clearness, precision, and earnestness, rather than in rhetorical ornament or imagery.

The first literary production of the boy Washington comes down to us in a letter to his playmate, Richard Henry Lee:

> "G. W.'s compliments to R. H. L.
> And likes his book full well.
> Henceforth will count him his friend,
> And hopes many happy days he may spend."

There may be little there to herald a coming writer, but the four lines are eloquent of painstaking effort. No doubt the verse, according to the boy's habits, was carefully corrected and copied before it was sent. The exercise books of his early school days, full of business forms of all kinds copied in a bold, firm hand bear witness to great exactness and orderliness. One of these contains his famous list of a hundred and ten *Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation.* They are stiff little maxims such as, "Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust,"

and "Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience;" but a deal of serious thought lies behind their meagre expression.

The next piece of writing from Washington's pen is the journal kept during his expedition to the Ohio, — an orderly, circumstantial report written for the sake of rendering a faithful account of his stewardship. Without color or gloss, it fascinates by its very directness. Of one of the most exciting incidents of the enterprise he writes simply: "There was no way for getting over [*the river*] but on a raft, which we set about, with but one poor hatchet, and finished just after sun-setting. This was a whole day's work; we next got it launched, then went on board of it, and set off; but before we were half-way over we were jammed in the ice, in such a manner that we expected every moment our raft to sink, and ourselves to perish. I put out my steering-pole to try to stop the raft, that the ice might pass by, when the rapidity of the stream threw it with so much violence against the pole that it jerked me out into ten feet water; but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the raft-logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get to either shore, but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make to it." There is no personal comment in the whole narrative more than that implied in the words *poor* and *fortunately;* and yet it appeals to us as does the simplicity and directness of *Robinson Crusoe.* Terse almost to the laughing point is his journal's record of a visit to the Indian queen, Aliquippa: "I made her a present of a watch-coat and a bottle of rum, which latter was thought much the better present of the two." What material for a romancer like our old historian John Smith! The journal ends: "On the 11th. I got to Belvoir where I stopped one day to get the necessary rest; and then set out and arrived in Williamsburg the 16th., where I waited upon his Honor the Governor with the letter I had brought from the French commandant, and to give an account of the success of my proceedings. This

I beg leave to do by offering the foregoing narrative, as it contains the most remarkable occurrences which happened in my journey. I hope what has been said will be sufficient to make your Honor satisfied with my conduct." Sufficient it surely ought to have been, for the man who wrote so straightforward an account must have marched straight forward to the accomplishment of his work.

A little more self-conscious and ceremonious, but none the less frank, is the style of his letter in answer to General Braddock's invitation to join him as aid-de-camp. The letter is addressed to Braddock's secretary, and begins as follows:

"SIR:

I was not favored with your polite letter of the 2nd. instant until yesterday; acquainting me with the notice his Excellency, General Braddock, is pleased to honor me with, by kindly inviting me to become one of his family the ensuing campaign. It is true, sir, I have, ever since I declined my late command, expressed an inclination to serve in this campaign as a volunteer; and this inclination is not a little increased, since it is likely to be conducted by a gentleman of the general's experience. But, besides this, and the laudable desire I may have to serve with my best abilities my king and my country, I must be ingenuous enough to confess that I am not a little biased by selfish considerations. To explain, sir, I wish earnestly to attain some knowledge in the military profession, and believing a more favorable opportunity cannot offer than to serve under a gentleman of General Braddock's abilities and experience, it does, you may reasonably suppose, not a little contribute to influence my choice."

Washington's only comment later on Braddock's insistence upon using British military tactics in an American wilderness full of Indians — a subject worthy of a philippic! — was this: "There has been vile management in regard to the horses." The same restraint characterizes the letter

which he wrote to his mother on the subject of their defeat; and yet his two pages are infinitely more graphic than any ten-page account in the histories, eloquent as those are upon one topic on which he maintains silence, — the good judgment of Washington.

Washington's power in argument first shows itself in his letter to Mr. Fairfax concerning the Stamp Act. The whole composition reads as convincingly as the most brilliant passages in Burke, and yet there is nothing more adorned than this: "I think the Parliament of Great Britain have no more right to put their hands into my pockets, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours; and this being already urged to them in a firm but decent manner, by all the colonies, what reason is there to expect anything from their justice?" Fact and experience were eloquent to Washington without the aid of rhetoric. His acceptance of his appointment to the head of the army is full of the modesty and loyalty that marked all that he wrote. "Mr. President: Though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me, in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a conciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause. . . But I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in this room that I, this day, declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with."

As soon as Washington had taken command of the army he began a series of letters to Congress which continued throughout the war. These state all his plans and movements with rigid exactness. If anything was needed he asked for it simply: "We labor under great disadvantages for want of tents," or "I find myself already much embarrassed for want of a military chest." But there are no long petitions or complaints: his business was to act for the inter-

ests of the country and to report his movements to Congress without superfluous personal comment or criticism, much as the conditions would have justified him in making them. It took a Valley Forge to strike a spark of fire into Washington's rhetoric. His indignation on behalf of his men made him eloquently ironical for the first time. "We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter quarters or not, . . . reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be, which are by no means exaggerated, to confine a superior one, in all respects well appointed and provided for a winter's campaign, within the city of Philadelphia. . . . I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and from my soul I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent." In 1783 Washington made his famous farewell address to the army, a speech so full of sincere emotion that it could not but be eloquent, although he who spoke it, falteringly, was no practiced orator. A note of impassioned exhortation creeps in here for the first time, a device which an ambitious young orator might assume, but which Washington could come by only honestly through experience and suffering with his men.

Even so brief a survey as this gives us the impression that never was the saying that "the style is the man" more true of any one than of Washington. The power of expression he would never have cultivated for artistic ends; it developed in him, step by step, only as his experience

demanded it for practical use. Where a record of an expedition was necessary, he wrote with plain accuracy; where national events became more complex and demanded careful thought and reasoning, his letters to Congress became more philosophical; where an appeal must be made for his soldiers, he could be impassioned; and when the time came for him to disband his army he had so found himself through years of experience that he spoke with a genuine eloquence. The record reads like that of a man made an orator almost in spite of himself.

In the *Farewell Address* of 1796 we have the full culmination of all these powers. It was an occasion that demanded much of Washington, and perhaps the speech bears more than usual the consciousness of composition. But it does not lose in a single sentence the ingenuousness of that boyish journal of 1753; time has only added to it the trained intellect, the practiced logic, the experienced judgment, the mellowed sympathy, and the temperate emotion that must lie at the foundation of all good and great eloquence. These, combined with Washington's inborn sense of elegance and dignity in form and expression, make the *Farewell Address* a piece of rare, unpretentious oratory that deserves to be known by heart by every student of American literature.

Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, in his *Life of Washington* (*American Statesmen Series*), writes: "In September, 1796, Washington published his farewell address, and no man ever left a nobler political testament. Through much tribulation he had done his great part in establishing the government of the Union, which might have come to naught without his commanding influence. . . . Now from the heights of great achievement he turned to say farewell to the people whom he so much loved, and whom he had so greatly served. Every word was instinct with the purest and wisest patriotism. . . . His admonitions were received by the people at large with profound respect, and sank deep into the public

mind. As the generations have come and gone, the farewell address has grown dearer to the hearts of the people, and the children and the children's children of those to whom it was addressed have turned to it in all times and known that there was no room for error in following its counsel."

II. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

1732. Feb. 22. Born in Westmoreland County, in the Colony of Virginia.

1748. Appointed surveyor of the extensive Fairfax property.

1751. Appointed Adjutant of the Virginia troops at outbreak of French and Indian War.

1752. Came into the charge of Mount Vernon, on the death of his brother Lawrence.

1753. Appointed Commander of the northern military district of Virginia. First journey to the Ohio. Commanded Virginia troops in defence of Fort Necessity.

1755. Commissioned Commander-in-Chief of all the Virginia forces. Served in Braddock's Campaign.

1758. Commanded the advance guard of the expedition that captured Fort DuQuesne.

1759. Married Mrs. Martha Custis and settled at Mount Vernon.

Elected to the House of Burgesses.

1774. Appointed by the Virginia Convention a delegate to the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia.

1775. July 2. Took command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1776. Drove the British out of Boston.

1777–78. Spent the winter at Valley Forge.

1781. Forced Cornwallis to surrender at Yorktown.

1783. Dec. 28. Resigned his commission as Commander-in-Chief.

1787. Presided over the Federal Convention at Philadelphia.

1789. Elected First President of the United States by unanimous vote of the people.

April 30. Took the oath of office upon the open balcony of the Federal Hall in Wall Street, New York.

1792. Reëlected President.

1796. Sept. 17. Published the *Farewell Address.*

1797. Retired to Mount Vernon.

1799. Dec. 14. Died at Mount Vernon.

III. REFERENCES ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF WASHINGTON

Washington Irving, *Life of Washington*, 5 vols. New York, 1855–59. Putnam.

John Fiske, *Washington and His Country* (Classics for Children Series). Boston, 1887. Ginn & Co.

(This is Irving's Life of Washington abridged for the use of schools.)

Jared Sparks, *Life of Washington.* Boston, 1839. Charles Tappan.

Jared Sparks (editor), *Writings of Washington*, 12 vols. Boston, 1837. Am. Stationers' Co.

W. C. Ford (editor), *Writings of Washington*, 14 vols. New York, 1889–93. G. P. Putnam's Sons. Careful and conscientious; standard edition.

W. C. Ford, *George Washington*, 2 vols. New York, 1900. Charles Scribner's Sons.

"The reverence which all Americans feel for the memory of Washington has to some extent disadvantageously affected his biographers. Solicitous to present him always clothed in a lofty and majestic greatness, they have made him something like a mythical hero; grand but indistinct, like a distant mountain. We welcome, therefore, a

biography that undertakes to show us the real Washington — the plain Virginia farmer, only moderately well educated, neither brilliant strategist nor profound statesman, who, chiefly by force of *character*, became greater than a monarch, and one of the most august names recorded in history." — *The Nation.*

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H. E. Scudder, *George Washington: An Historical Biography.* Boston, 1886. Houghton Mifflin Co. Riverside Library for Young People.

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Encyclopedia Britannica. Good, brief account.

S. Weir Mitchell, *The Youth of Washington,* Told in the Form of an Autobiography. New York, 1904. The Century Co.

H. van Dyke, *Harper's,* 113: 770. *The Americanism of Washington.*

Woodrow Wilson, *General Washington, Harper's*, 93 : 165. (Illustrated.) *In Washington's Day, Harper's*, 92 : 169. (Illustrated.)

Norman Hapgood, *George Washington.* New York, 1900. The Macmillan Co.

"Mr. Hapgood brings into prominence sides of Washington's character not commonly dwelt upon — his thoroughly practical and matter-of-fact mind, his mingled modesty and self-confidence, his outward show of courage and faith in spite of inward doubt and trial, and his conscientious devotion to the small details of private and public duty. The result is a presentation of Washington on his human side, which, while at times somewhat painful to hero-worshippers, happily avoids the belittling manner into which this style of biography easily falls." — *The Nation.*

IV. REFERENCES ON THE FAREWELL ADDRESS

First printed in Claypoole's *Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, Sept. 19, 1796. Original manuscript is in the Lenox Library, New York.

Jared Sparks, *Life of Washington.* Appendix V. Also his edition of Washington's Writings, vol. xii, pp. 387–391. Note on the authorship of the *Farewell Address.*

Horace Binney, *Inquiry into the Formation of the Farewell Address.* Philadelphia, 1859. A shorter account by the same author in *Forum*, vol. xxvii, 145.

Circumstances of publication first recounted by D. C. Claypoole, Feb. 22, 1826, in *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, vol. i, part ii, p. 249.

W. C. Ford, Edition of Washington's writings, vol. xiii, 190, 277 ; vol. xii, 125.

John B. McMaster, *Washington's Farewell Address and a Century of American History, Outlook*, Feb. 25, 1899, 61 : 448.

A. P. Peabody, *North American Review*, 90 : 206. Review of Horace Binney's *Inquiry* Concerning the Authorship.

Edward Everett, *North American Review*, 47 : 318. Review of Sparks's *Life*.

R. E. Jones, *Forum*, 28 : 13. *Washington's Farewell Address and Its Applications.*

B. C. Washington, *Forum*, 27 : 145. *Was Washington the Author of His Farewell Address?*

V. AUTHORSHIP OF THE FAREWELL ADDRESS

The question of the authorship of the *Address*, as Jared Sparks points out, is one of small moment, since its real importance consists in the fact that it embodies the sentiments of Washington, uttered on a solemn occasion, and designed for the benefit of his countrymen. Whether every idea in it arose spontaneously from his own mind, or whether every word was first traced by his pen, or whether he acted as every wise man would naturally act under the same circumstances, and sought counsel from other sources claiming respect and confidence, or in what degree he pursued any or all of these methods, are unimportant points, compared with the object and matter of the whole.

When Washington accepted the Presidency, to which he had been called by the unanimous voice of the people, he intended to remain in office only one term; and toward the close of that term he sought the aid of Madison in drawing up a valedictory address. As Washington was prevailed upon to accept a second term, no use was made of this first draft. He firmly resolved, however, to retire at the end of the second term; and, as the time approached, he began to consider an address to the people, which should communicate his decision and convey such sentiments as the occasion might properly call forth, or as his long experience and services authorized him to give. There is proof that the subject occupied his thoughts nearly a year before his term expired.

Of his counsellors, none was higher in his confidence than

Hamilton. Hamilton had stood by him in every hour of trial, true in friendship and powerful in support. A note from Hamilton to Washington, dated May 10, 1796, shows that Hamilton had been invited and was glad to aid in revising a rough draft that Washington had prepared.

A paper has been preserved in which is first inserted Madison's draft, and then a series of notes by Washington to be wrought into the new address. These notes include nearly all the elements of the main points of the address as it was finally published. Various drafts were sent back and forth between Washington and Hamilton. The work was nearly four months in hand, and was executed with a deliberation and solicitude that show how important they regarded it.

In May, 1796, the President wrote to Hamilton: "Even if you should think it best to throw the whole into a different form, let me request, notwithstanding, that my draft may be returned to me (along with yours) with such amendments and corrections as to render it as perfect as the formation is susceptible of; curtailed if too verbose; and relieved of all tautology not necessary to enforce the ideas in the original or quoted part. My wish is that the whole may appear in a plain style, and be handed to the public in an honest, unaffected, simple, part."

When Hamilton had made a new draft of the address with such alterations as he deemed advisable, he read it to John Jay for criticism, and they discussed it paragraph by paragraph until the whole met with their approval. It is clear from John Jay's testimony that he believed Hamilton's transcript to be in substance essentially the same as Washington's original.

The copy from which the final draft was printed is wholly in the handwriting of Washington, and bears the marks of a most rigid and laborious revision. It is thus described by Mr. Claypoole: "The manuscript copy consists of thirty-two pages of quarto letter paper, sewed together as a book,

and with many alterations; as in some places whole paragraphs are erased, and others substituted; in others, many lines struck out; in others, sentences and words erased, and others interlined in their stead. The tenth, eleventh, and sixteenth pages are almost entirely expunged, saving only a few lines; and one-half of the thirty-first page is also effaced." [1]

Jared Sparks, in his *Life of Washington*, concludes, "My opinion is, that the *Address*, in the shape it now bears, is much indebted for its language and style to the careful revision and skilful pen of Hamilton; that he suggested some of the topics and amplified others; and that he undertook this task not more as an act of friendship, than from a sincere desire that a paper of this kind should go before the public in a form which would give it great and lasting utility. But I do not think that this aid, however valuable, was such as to detract from the substantial merit of Washington, or to divest him of a fair claim to the authorship of the *Address*."

Horace Binney (in his "Inquiry," 1859) says that the fundamental thoughts and principles were Washington's, but he was not the composer. "Hamilton was, in the prevalent literary sense, the composer and writer of the paper. The occasional adoption of Washington's language does not materially take from the justice of this attribution. The new plan, the different form, proceeded from Hamilton. He was the author of it. He put together the thoughts of Washington in a new order, and with a new bearing; and while, as often as he could, he used the words of Washington, his own language was the general vehicle, both of his own thoughts, and for the expansion and combination of Washington's thoughts. Hamilton developed the thoughts of Washington, and corroborated them — included several cognate subjects, and added many effective thoughts from

[1] *Memoirs* of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, vol. i, p. 257.

his own mind, and united all into one chain by the links of his masculine logic."

VI. QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON THE FAREWELL ADDRESS

1. Make an outline of the *Address*, giving the main topics in order and the sub-topics under each main topic.

2. What propositions does Washington undertake to prove? What arguments does he present in support of each proposition?

3. To what extent was Washington indebted to Madison in the preparation of the *Address?* To Hamilton? To Jay?

4. Norman Hapgood says that the credit for the *Address* is properly given to Washington by the world, for the experience was his, the solution his, Hamilton his. What facts of history can you present in support of this judgment?

5. Was Washington justified in publishing the *Address* with no public recognition of his indebtedness to Hamilton?

6. Norman Hapgood says that the *Address* "is written with a literary vigor quite beyond the reach of Washington himself." Jared Sparks says that no one, after reading the other writings of Washington, can "doubt his ability to compose such a paper." Read other writings by Washington and consider which of these judgments seems to you nearer the truth.

7. What were the circumstances of the first presentation of the *Address* to the people?

8. Was Washington a true American? (Consult *Harper's Magazine*, 113 : 770.)

9. Discuss the character of Washington as revealed in the *Address*.

10. Washington advised the nation to "avoid the accumu-

lation of debt"; to "resist with care the spirit of innovation" upon the principles of our government; "to observe good faith and justice toward all nations"; "to promote institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge." Has the United States heeded the advice of the Father of the Country in these particulars?

(For help on questions 10, 11, 12, see the *Outlook*, Feb. 25, 1899.)

11. What other warnings are given in the *Address?* To what extent have they been heeded?

12. Has all that Washington hoped for in the development of the nation been fully attained?

13. What kind of alliances with foreign powers did Washington regard as "entangling"?

(For aid on this and the next five questions, consult the *Forum*, 28: 13.)

14. Can the *Address* be construed as an argument against imperialism?

15. Washington said, "If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyances." What specific annoyances did he have in mind?

16. "Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote relation." To what does this refer?

17. "Our national situation enables us to pursue a course of self-withdrawal from European affairs." In what respects has the situation changed since Washington wrote these words? To what extent have we participated in European affairs within the past twenty years?

18. Is the Monroe Doctrine implied in the *Address?*

19. What are the three branches of the Federal government? What does Washington mean by "reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power"? Quote the sections of the *Constitution* bearing on this point.

20. Explain Washington's reference to "permanent, in-

veterate national antipathies and passionate attachments." What was the special need of warning the people against passionate attachments? What expression of such an attachment was made on the occasion of the Bunker Hill Oration?

21. What were Washington's objections to party government?

22. What can be said in favor of party government?

23. Have there been any tendencies in recent years for one department of the government to encroach upon another?

24. Have we yet become "a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence"?

25. What was the "subsisting war in Europe" toward which Washington took a neutral position? What incentives had our people to take part in the war?

26. "As a didactic writer, he can scarcely be esteemed too much; his sentiments have a force and fascination to restore reason, invigorate patriotism, and awaken piety; his public letters and documents should be engraved upon the tablet of the nation, as examples of profound sagacity, genuine integrity, and unaffected humility: they should be eternally regarded, in a political interpretation, as 'eyes to the blind.' His simplicity of style proves him to have been guided by a fine taste; when a writer is verbose or glittering, his argument is weakened, and none but the unwise can admire him." (From *Washington's Political Legacies*, published 1800.) To what extent is this judgment of the year 1800 the judgment of to-day?

27. Find out by count the average number of words per sentence in any three pages of Washington's *Address*, in any three pages of Webster's Oration, and in any one of your own compositions. What conclusions do you draw regarding your own style?

(See also questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 in Part XV of the Introduction to Webster's Oration.)

FAREWELL ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON was chosen first President of the United States, and at the end of his term he was again chosen. When his second term drew near its close, he refused to be a candidate for reëlection, and six months before he was to leave the President's chair he issued the following farewell address, September 17, 1796.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: The period for a new election of a citizen, to administer the executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me,

have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that, in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have with good intentions contributed toward the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious in the outset of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that, if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my

services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guaranty of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preser-

vation and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes and from different quarters much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively

(though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of America, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the

South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and, while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and, what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource,

proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations, and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same governments, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a

government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial

and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of fashion, rather than the organs of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the constitution, alterations, which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual

change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember, especially, that, for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discrimination. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the abso-

lute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continued mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion, that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true, and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not

to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution, in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern, some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for, though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indis-

pensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is, to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disburse-

ments to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertion in time of peace to discharge the debts, which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment, inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties), ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages, which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The

experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence, frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a partici-

pation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens), the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it.

Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situa-

tion? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in

one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that, by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But, if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index of my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both Houses

of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors.

Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

INTRODUCTION

1. THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

As early as 1776, steps were taken toward the commemoration of the Battle of Bunker Hill and the heroic death of Dr. Joseph Warren, who was buried upon the hill the day after the action. At the time of the battle, Warren was a major-general in the Continental Army. The Massachusetts Lodge of Masons, over which Warren had presided, applied to the provisional government of Massachusetts for permission to take up his remains and to bury them with the usual solemnities. The council granted this request, on condition that the government of *the Colony* might have an opportunity to erect a monument to his memory. A eulogy on General Warren was delivered, but no measures were taken toward building a monument.

A resolution was adopted by the Congress of the United States on the 8th of April, 1777, directing that monuments should be erected to the memory of General Warren, in Boston, and of General Mercer, at Fredericksburg; but this resolution has remained unexecuted.

On the 11th of November, 1794, a committee was appointed by King Solomon's Lodge, at Charlestown, to take measures for the erection of a monument to the memory of General Joseph Warren, at the expense of the lodge. This resolution was promptly carried into effect. The land for this purpose was presented to the lodge by the Hon. James Russell, of Charlestown, and it was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies in 1794. It was a wooden pillar of the Tuscan order, eighteen feet in height, raised on a pedestal eight feet square, and of an elevation of ten feet from the ground. The pillar was surmounted by a gilt urn.

In February, 1818, a committee of the legislature of Massachusetts was appointed to consider the expediency of building a monument of American marble to the memory of General Warren, but this proposal was not carried into effect.

As the half-century from the date of the battle drew toward a close, a stronger feeling of the duty of commemorating it awakened in the community. Among those who from the first manifested great interest in the subject was William Tudor. He expressed the wish, in a letter still preserved, to see upon the battleground "the noblest monument in the world," and he was ardent and persevering in urging the project. The steps taken, from the earliest private conferences, are accurately recorded by Richard Frothingham, Jr., in his valuable *History of the Siege of Boston*. All the material facts contained in this note are derived from his chapter on the Bunker Hill Monument. After giving an account of the organization of the society, the measures adopted for the collection of funds, and the deliberations on the form of the monument, Mr. Frothingham says: —

"It was at this stage of the enterprise that the directors proposed to lay the corner-stone of the monument, and ground was broken (June 7th) for this purpose. As a mark of respect to the liberality and patriotism of King Solomon's Lodge, they invited the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts to perform the ceremony. They also invited General Lafayette to accompany the President of the Association, Hon. Daniel Webster, and assist in it."

II. THE CEREMONY AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE

(Account taken from the *History of the Siege of Boston*, by Richard Frothingham, page 344.)

This celebration was unequalled in magnificence by anything of the kind that had been seen in New England.

The morning proved propitious. The air was cool, the sky was clear, and timely showers the previous day had brightened the vesture of nature into its loveliest hue. Delighted thousands flocked into Boston to bear a part in the proceedings, or to witness the spectacle. At about ten o'clock a procession moved from the State House towards Bunker Hill. The military, in their fine uniforms, formed the van. About two hundred veterans of the Revolution, of whom forty were survivors of the battle, rode in barouches next to the escort. These venerable men, the relics of a past generation, with emaciated frames, tottering limbs, and trembling voices, constituted a touching spectacle. Some wore, as honorable decorations, their old fighting equipments, and some bore the scars of still more honorable wounds. Glistening eyes constituted their answer to the enthusiastic cheers of the grateful multitudes who lined their pathway and cheered their progress. To this patriot band succeeded the Bunker Hill Monument Association. Then the Masonic fraternity, in their splendid regalia, thousands in number. Then LAFAYETTE, continually welcomed by tokens of love and gratitude. . . . It was a splendid procession, and of such length that the front nearly reached Charlestown Bridge ere the rear had left Boston Common. It proceeded to Breed's Hill, where the Grand Master of the Freemasons, the President of the Monument Association, and General Lafayette performed the ceremony of laying the corner-stone, in the presence of a vast concourse of people. The procession then moved to a spacious amphitheatre on the northern declivity of the hill, where Hon. Daniel Webster delivered an address. It was at the close of a dedicatory passage on the monument that he uttered the words, "Let it rise till it meet the sun in its coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit."

DESCRIPTION BY AN EYE-WITNESS: — George Ticknor Curtis, in his *Life of Daniel Webster* (vol. i, p. 248),

says: "Among the reminiscences furnished me by Mr. Ticknor, I find the following: —

"'June 17, 1825. We arrived in good season on the hill, where more than twenty thousand people were collected. The platform from which Mr. Webster spoke was at the bottom, and temporary seats for several thousand persons were arranged on the rising hillside, while, near the brow above, stood a dense black mass, most of whom could hear what was said. His voice was very clear and full, and his manner very commanding. . . .

"'The passage about the rising of the monument and the address to the survivors of the battle were the most effective parts of the oration. The shouts at the first were prolonged until it seemed as if they would not stop: the address brought tears into the eyes of many, and bowed down the heads of the veterans themselves to conceal their emotion.'"

Another interesting contemporary account is found in the *United States Literary Gazette* for August 1, 1825 (II: 327).

As no definite plan for the monument had been agreed upon, it was 1827 before the work of construction began. The architect was Solomon Willard and the builder was James Savage. After many difficulties and delays, the needed money was all secured and the capstone put in place on July 23, 1842.

Monument Square, covering nearly six acres, embraces the whole site of the redoubt, and a part of the site of the breastwork. The obelisk is thirty feet in diameter at the base, about fifteen feet at the top, and two hundred and twenty-one feet high. Within the shaft is a hollow cone, with a winding staircase of two hundred and ninety-four steps to the summit.

III. ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

(From *The American Revolution*, by John Fiske.)

While these things [the proceedings of the Continental Congress] were going on at Philadelphia, the army of New England men about Boston was busily pressing, to the best

of its limited ability, the siege of that town. The army extended in a great semicircle of sixteen miles, — averaging about a thousand men to the mile, — all the way from Jamaica Plain to Charlestown Neck. The headquarters were at Cambridge, where some of the university buildings were used for barracks, and the chief command had been entrusted to General Artemas Ward, under the direction of the committee of safety. Dr. Warren had succeeded Hancock as president of the provincial congress, which was in session at Watertown. The army was excellent in spirit, but poorly equipped, and extremely deficient in discipline. Its military object was to compel the British troops to evacuate Boston and take to their ships; for as there was no American fleet, anything like the destruction or capture of the British force was manifestly impossible. The only way in which Boston could be made untenable for the British was by seizing and fortifying some of the neighbouring hills which commanded the town, of which the most important were those in Charlestown on the north and in Dorchester on the southeast. To secure these hills was indispensable to Gage, if he was to keep his foothold in Boston; and as soon as Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne arrived, on the 25th of May, with reinforcements which raised the British force to 10,000 men, a plan was laid for extending the lines so as to cover both Charlestown and Dorchester. Feeling now confident of victory, Gage issued a proclamation on June 12th, offering free pardon to all rebels who should lay down their arms and return to their allegiance, saving only those ringleaders, John Hancock and Samuel Adams, whose crimes had been "too flagitious to be condoned." At the same time, all who should be taken in arms were threatened with the gallows. In reply to this manifesto the committee of safety, having received intelligence of Gage's scheme, ordered out a force of 1200 men to forestall the governor, and take possession of Bunker Hill in Charlestown. At sunset of the 16th this brigade was paraded on Cambridge

Common, and after prayer had been offered by Dr. Langdon, president of the University, they set out on their enterprise, under command of Colonel Prescott of Pepperell, a veteran of the French war, grandfather of one of the most eminent of American historians. On reaching the grounds, a consultation was held, and it was decided, in accordance with the general purpose, if not in strict conformity to the letter of the order, to push on farther and fortify the eminence known as Breed's Hill, which was connected by a ridge with Bunker Hill, and might be regarded as part of the same locality. The position of Breed's Hill was admirably fitted for annoying the town and the ships in the harbour, and it was believed that, should the Americans succeed in planting batteries there, the British would be obliged to retire from Boston. There can be little doubt, however, that in thus departing from the strict letter of his orders Prescott made a mistake, which might have proved fatal, had not the enemy blundered still more seriously. The advanced position on Breed's Hill was not only exposed to attacks in the rear from an enemy who commanded the water, but the line of retreat was ill secured, and, by seizing upon Charlestown Neck, it would have been easy for the British, with little or no loss, to have compelled Prescott to surrender. From such a disaster the Americans were saved by the stupid contempt which the enemy felt for them.

Reaching Breed's Hill about midnight, Colonel Prescott's men began throwing up intrenchments. At daybreak they were discovered by the sailors in the harbour, and a lively cannonade was kept up through the forenoon by the enemy's ships; but it produced little effect, and the strength of the American works increased visibly hour by hour. It was a beautiful summer day, bathed in brightest sunshine, and through the clear dry air every movement of the spadesmen on the hill-top and the sailors on their decks could be distinctly seen from a great distance. The roar of the cannon had called out everybody, far and near, to see what was

going on, and the windows and housetops in Boston were crowded with anxious spectators. During the night General Putnam had come upon the scene, and turned his attention to fortifying the crest of Bunker Hill, in order to secure the line of retreat across Charlestown Neck. In the course of the forenoon Colonel Stark arrived with reinforcements, which were posted behind the rail fence on the extreme left, to ward off any attempt of the British to turn their flank by a direct attack. At the same time Dr. Warren, now chief executive officer of Massachusetts, and just appointed major-general, hastened to the battlefield; replying to the prudent and affectionate remonstrance of his friend Elbridge Gerry, "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." Arriving at the redoubt, he refused the command expressly tendered him, saying that he should be only too glad to serve as volunteer aid, and learn his first lesson under so well tried a soldier as Prescott. This modest heroism was typical of that memorable day, to the events of which one may well apply the Frenchman's dictum, "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!" A glorious day it was in history, but characterized, on both the British and the American sides, by heroism rather than by military skill or prudence.

During the forenoon Gage was earnestly discussing with the three new generals the best means of ousting the Americans from their position on Breed's Hill. There was one sure and obvious method, — to go around by sea and take possession of Charlestown Neck, thereby cutting off the Americans from the mainland and starving them out. But it was thought that time was too precious to admit of so slow a method. Should the Americans succeed, in the course of the afternoon, in planting a battery of siege guns on Breed's Hill, the British position in Boston would be endangered. A direct assault was preferred, as likely to be more speedily effective. It was unanimously agreed that these "peasants" could not withstand the charge of 3000 veteran soldiers, and

it was gravely doubted if they would stay and fight at all. Gage accordingly watched the proceedings, buoyant with hope. In a few hours the disgrace of Lexington would be wiped out, and this wicked rebellion would be ended. At noonday the troops began crossing the river in boats, and at three o'clock they prepared to storm the intrenchments. They advanced in two parties, General Howe toward the rail fence, and General Pigott toward the redoubt, and the same fate awaited both. The Americans reserved fire until the enemy had come within fifty yards, when all at once they poured forth such a deadly volley that the whole front rank of the British was mowed as if by the sudden sweep of a scythe. For a few minutes the gallant veterans held their ground and returned the fire; but presently an indescribable shudder ran through the line, and they gave way and retreated down the hillside in disorder, while the Americans raised an exultant shout, and were with difficulty restrained by their officers from leaping over the breastworks and pursuing.

A pause now ensued, during which the village of Charlestown was set on fire by shells from the fleet, and soon its four hundred wooden houses were in a roaring blaze, while charred timbers strewed the lawns and flower-beds, and the sky was blackened with huge clouds of smoke. If the purpose of this wholesale destruction of property was, as some have thought, to screen the second British advance, the object was not attained, for a light breeze drove the smoke the wrong way. As the bright red coats, such excellent targets for trained marksmen, were seen the second time coming up the slope, the Americans, now cool and confident, withheld their fire until the distance was less than thirty yards Then, with a quick succession of murderous discharges, such havoc was wrought in the British lines as soon to prove unendurable. After a short but obstinate struggle the lines were broken, and the gallant troops retreated hastily, leaving the hillside covered with their dead and wounded. All

this time the Americans, in their sheltered position, had suffered but little.

So long a time now elapsed that many persons began to doubt if the British would renew the assault. Had the organization of the American army been better, such reinforcements of men and ammunition might by this time have arrived from Cambridge that any further attack upon the hill would be sure to prove fruitless. But all was confusion at headquarters. General Ward was ill furnished with staff officers, and wrong information was brought, while orders were misunderstood. And besides, in his ignorance of the extent of Gage's plans, General Ward was nervously afraid of weakening his centre at Cambridge. Three regiments were sent over too late to be of any use, and meanwhile Prescott, to his dismay, found that his stock of powder was nearly exhausted. While he was making ready for a hand-to-hand fight, the British officers were holding a council of war, and many declared that to renew the attack would be simply useless butchery. On the other hand, General Howe observed, "To be forced to give up Boston would, gentlemen, be very disagreeable to us all." The case was not really so desperate as this, for the alternative of an attack upon Charlestown Neck still remained open, and every consideration of sound generalship now prescribed that it should be tried. But Howe could not bear to acknowledge the defeat of his attempts to storm, and accordingly, at five o'clock, with genuine British persistency, a third attack was ordered. For a moment the advancing columns were again shaken by the American fire, but the last cartridges were soon spent, and by resolute bayonet charges and irregular volleys that could not be returned the Americans were slowly driven from their works and forced to retreat over Charlestown Neck, while the whole disputed ground, including the summit of Bunker Hill, passed into the hands of the British.

In this battle, in which not more than one hour was spent

in actual fighting, the British loss in killed and wounded was 1054, or more than one third of the whole force engaged, including an unusually large proportion of officers. The American loss, mainly incurred at the rail fence and during the final hand-to-hand struggle at the redoubt, was 449, probably about one fourth of the whole force engaged. On the British side, one company of grenadiers came out of the battle with only five of its number left unhurt. Every officer on General Howe's staff was cut down, and only one survived his wounds. The gallant Pitcairn, who had fired the first shot of the war, fell while entering the redoubt, and a few moments later the Americans met with an irreparable loss in the death of General Warren, who was shot in the forehead as he lingered with rash obstinacy on the scene, loath to join in the inevitable retreat. Another volunteer aid, not less illustrious than Warren, fought on Bunker Hill that day, and came away scatheless. Since the brutal beating which he had received at the coffee-house nearly six years before, the great intellect of James Otis had suffered well-nigh total wreck. He was living, harmlessly insane, at the house of his sister, Mercy Warren, at Watertown, when he witnessed the excitement and listened to the rumour of battle on the morning of the 17th of June. With touching eagerness to strike a blow for the cause in which he had already suffered so dreadful a martyrdom, Otis stole away from home, borrowed a musket at some roadside farmhouse, and hastened to the battlefield, where he fought manfully, and after all was over made his way home, weary and faint, a little before midnight.

Though small in its dimensions, if compared with great European battles, or with the giant contests of our own civil war, the struggle at Bunker Hill is memorable and instructive, even from a purely military point of view. Considering the numbers engaged and the short duration of the fight, the destruction of life was enormous. Of all the hardest-fought fields of modern times, there have been very

few indeed in which the number of killed and wounded has exceeded one fourth of the whole force engaged. In its bloodiness and in the physical conditions of the struggle, the battle of Bunker Hill resembles in miniature the tremendous battles of Fredericksburg and Cold Harbor. To ascend a rising ground and storm well-manned intrenchments has in all ages been a difficult task; at the present day, with the range and precision of our modern weapons, it has come to be almost impossible. It has become a maxim of modern warfare that only the most extraordinary necessity can justify a commander in resorting to so desperate a measure. He must manœuvre against such positions, cut them off by the rear, or deprive them of their value by some flanking march; but he must not, save as a forlorn hope, waste precious human lives in an effort to storm them that is almost sure to prove fruitless. For our means of destroying life have become so powerful and so accurate that, when skilfully wielded from commanding positions, no human gallantry can hope to withstand them. As civilization advances, warfare becomes less and less a question of mere personal bravery, and more and more a question of the application of resistless physical forces at the proper points; that is to say, it becomes more and more a purely scientific problem of dynamics. Now at Bunker Hill, though the Americans had not our modern weapons of precision, yet a similar effect was wrought by the remarkable accuracy of their aim, due to the fact that they were all trained marksmen, who waited coolly till they could fire at short range, and then wasted no shots in random firing. Most of the British soldiers who fell in the two disastrous charges of that day were doubtless picked off as partridges are picked off by old sportsmen, and thus is explained the unprecedented slaughter of officers. Probably nothing quite like this had yet been seen in the history of war, though the principle had been similar in those wonderful trials of the long-bow in such mediæval battles as Crécy and Dupplin Moor. Against

such odds even British pluck and endurance could not possibly prevail. Under these circumstances, had the Americans been properly supplied with powder, Howe could no more have taken Bunker Hill by storm than Burnside could take the heights of Fredericksburg.

The moral effect of the battle of Bunker Hill, both in America and Europe, was remarkable. It was for the British a decided and important victory, inasmuch as they not only gained the ground for which the battle was fought, but by so doing they succeeded in keeping their hold upon Boston for nine months longer. Nevertheless, the moral advantage was felt to be entirely on the side of the Americans. It was they who were elated by the day's work, while it was the British who were dispirited. The belief that Americans could not fight was that day dispelled forever. British officers who remembered Fontenoy and Minden declared that the firing at Bunker Hill was the hottest they had ever known, and, with an exaggeration which was pardonable as a reaction from their former ill-judged contempt, it was asserted that the regulars of France were less formidable foes than the militia of New England. It was keenly felt that if a conquest of a single strategic position had encountered such stubborn resistance, the task of subjugating the United Colonies was likely to prove a hard one. "I wish we could sell them another hill at the same price," said General Greene. Vergennes, the French minister of foreign affairs, exclaimed that with two more such victories England would have no army left in America. Washington said there could now be no doubt that the liberties of the people were secure. While Franklin, taking extreme ground, declared that England had lost her colonies forever.

IV. JUDGMENTS CONCERNING THE FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION

"The oration, with its historical picturesqueness, its richness of thought and reasoning, its broad sweep of contempla-

tion, and the noble and magnificent simplicity of its eloquence, was in itself an event. No literary production of the period in America received greater renown." CARL SCHURZ.

In a contemporary review of the Bunker Hill Oration, found in the *United States Literary Gazette* for August 1, 1825, the writer says: "Mr. Webster, as an orator, is decidedly of the Demosthenian school; and we have more than once, in other places, designated him as the Demosthenes of America. . . . If the structure and arrangement of Mr. Webster's sentences were equal to the beauty and grandeur of his conceptions, he would be, in our times, *facile princeps*, clearly the first. We have heard most of the celebrated orators of this generation, and we have no hesitation in saying, that in native vigor and grasp of intellect, in the powers of comprehension and concentration, in that majestic movement of spirit, which bears onward the reason and the feelings of the hearer, he is without a rival on either side of the Atlantic."

"The address on occasion of the foundation of the Bunker Hill Monument, and the Eulogies on Adams and Jefferson, and Washington, are of the same general class. They belong to a species of oratory neither forensic, parliamentary, nor academical; and which might perhaps conveniently enough be designated as the patriotic style. They are strongly distinguished from the forensic and parliamentary class of speeches, in being, from the necessity of the case, more elaborately prepared. The public taste, in a highly cultivated community, would not admit, in a performance of this character, those marks of extemporaneous execution, which it not only tolerates, but admires, in the unpremeditated eloquence of the bar and the senate."
(From Everett's review of Webster's speeches, in the *North American Review* for July, 1835. This is a valuable analysis of Webster's oratory.)

As Webster tells us in his Autobiography, he was accustomed to prepare formal speeches in the quiet of the woods and fields. The splendid passage addressed to the surviving veterans of Bunker Hill was first delivered to the trout in Marshpee Brook, on the southeast coast of Massachusetts. Mr. Fletcher Webster tells about this occasion with amusing details. (In the *Life of Webster*, by Curtis, vol. i, p. 250.)

George Ticknor says in his reminiscences: "Mr. Webster often talked with me of the work, and seemed quite anxious about it, especially after it was decided that General Lafayette could be present. A few days before he delivered it, he read it over to me. The magnificent opening gave him much concern; so did the address to Lafayette; but about that to the Revolutionary soldiers, and the survivors of the Battle, he said that he felt as if he knew how to talk to such men, for that his father, and many of his father's friends, whom he had known, had been among them. He said he had known General Stark, and that the last time he saw him, — he said, 'Daniel, your face is pretty black, but it is n't so black as your father's was with gunpowder at the Bennington fight.'"

Edward Everett (in the *North American Review*, July, 1835) declares that one of the most eloquent passages that ever dropped from the lips of man, is the address to the survivors of the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the apostrophe to Warren. "These were topics, of course, too obvious and essential . . . to have been omitted in the orator's notes. But the man who supposes that the apostrophe to Warren was elaborated in the closet, and committed to memory, may know a great deal about contingent remainders, but his heart must be as dry and hard as a remainder biscuit. . . . In the slight grammatical inaccuracy, produced by passing from the third person to the second in the same sentence, we perceive at once one of the most natural con-

sequences and a most unequivocal proof of the want of premeditation. When the sentence commenced, 'But, — ah, — him,' it was evidently in the mind of the orator to close it by saying, 'how shall I commemorate him?' But in the progress of the sentence, — forgetful, — unconscious of the words, but glowing and melting with the thought; beholding, as he stood near the spot where the hero fell, his beloved and beautiful image rising up from beneath the sod, 'with the rose of heaven upon his cheek and the fire of liberty in his eye,— the blood of his gallant heart still pouring from his wound,' — he no longer can speak *of* him; he must speak *to* him."

V. WEBSTER'S PROSE STYLE

Concerning Webster's extreme care in the choice of words and phrases, consult George Ticknor's anecdote about the writing of the First Bunker Hill Oration. (In the *Life of Webster*, by Curtis, vol. i, p. 250.)

Mr. Curtis himself says: "With these formal orations, which he regarded as coming within the domain of scholarship, and on which he was conscious that his fame as an orator was, in part, to rest with present and future generations, he was extremely careful, as they were passing through the press. He would correct them with a severity of taste that was far more rigorous than any standard that the public was likely to apply to them; and, when he failed to satisfy himself, he would resort to the aid of others. . . . One great secret of the directness with which he reached the minds of men lay in the simplicity and purity of his style; a simplicity that was the result of the clearness and vigor of his thought, and a purity that was the result of a highly-cultivated and disciplined taste."

"When speaking extemporaneously, he seldom would make use of a word or words which did not altogether satisfy him; when that *did* happen, he would strike from his

remarks, by a short pause, the word he had first used, and substitute another. If that did not altogether please him, he would employ still another, and so on, until he had obtained just the word he wanted, and *that* would be uttered with such emphasis as he alone could give to language."

Harper's Magazine, December, 1852.

"Webster had not much imagination and he seldom appealed to feeling. He reasons with irresistible force and in language plain but well-chosen, terse, and thoroughly effective. His sentences have been compared to the strokes of a trip hammer. Like the strokes of a trip hammer they are in the sureness of aim and in the force with which they shatter the arguments on the other side, but not in monotony, for their construction and connection are sufficiently varied."

GOLDWIN SMITH, in *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1888.

VI. WEBSTER'S CONCEPTION OF ELOQUENCE

Webster gave his own definition of true oratory in a discourse in commemoration of the lives and services of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, in 1826. While speaking of the eloquence of Adams, Webster said: —

"When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable in speech farther than as it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the

pomp of declamation, all may aspire to it; they cannot reach it. It comes, if it comes at all, like the outbreaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object, — this, this is eloquence; or rather it is something greater and higher than all eloquence, it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action."

VII. WEBSTER'S POWER IN ORATORY

"He won peculiar lustre through his memorable argument in the famous Dartmouth College case before the Federal Supreme Court, which fascinated John Marshall on the bench, and moved to tears the thronged audience in the court-room. It left Webster with no superior and with few rivals at the American bar. It may be questioned whether he was a great lawyer in the highest sense. There were others whose knowledge was larger and more thorough, and whose legal opinion carried greater authority. But hardly any of these surpassed him in the faculty of seizing, with instinctive sureness of grasp, the vital point of a cause, of endowing mere statement with the power of demonstration, of marshalling facts and arguments in massive array for concentric attacks on the decisive point, of moving the feel-

ings together with the understanding by appeals of singular magic." CARL SCHURZ.

"I was present (then a boy) at the laying of the corner-stone, in the outskirts of that vast audience, and well remember that, when order was restored, . . . Mr. Webster's clarion voice was distinctly heard at the spot where I stood. His voice, in public speaking, was a very peculiar one. Whether speaking in the open air, or under a roof, he could make himself heard to a great distance, apparently without much effort, and without being unpleasantly loud to those who were near him. This was partly due to the quality of his voice, which was naturally pitched at a high key, but which was tempered by such a richness of tone that it was never in the smallest degree shrill. It was due also to what might be called the quantity of his voice. He had an unusual capacity of chest and vocal organs, and hence his voice was one of extraordinary volume. It was, moreover, so entirely under his control, when his vocal organs were in full play, that it never broke, however high it might rise in the scale of its natural compass, or whatever might be the state of his emotions."
GEORGE TICKNOR CURTIS (*Life of Webster*, vol. i, p. 249).

"In his character as an orator, he occupied the three great fields of eloquence, the popular, the forensic, and the parliamentary. And if the questions were asked, by whom, in our own age and country, the appropriate excellence of each of these kinds has been in the highest degree illustrated, it could not be better answered, than by pointing for the first, to Mr. Webster's addresses at Plymouth and Bunker Hill; for the second, to his pleas in the case of the Knapps, and of Dartmouth College; for the third, to his replies to Hayne and Calhoun in the debates in the Senate on Nullification.

"In some particular excellences of oratory, it may readily

be allowed that he was surpassed by some others; — in overpowering vehemence perhaps by Demosthenes, in ornate and copious diction by Cicero, in the exuberant gush of moral sentiment and enthusiasm by Burke, in sparkling wit and felicitous point by Sheridan, in subtle dialectics by Calhoun, in the graces of elocution and power to move the passions by Henry Clay: but in the harmonious combination of opposite excellences, in the blending of reason and of passion, of argument and illustration, of learning and imagination, of logic and rhetoric, of strength and beauty; in the whole impression thus produced; in that central power of commanding attention and securing conviction and persuasion; he was rarely equalled and perhaps never surpassed."

LEONARD WOODS, President of Bowdoin College.
(Eulogy delivered in 1852.)

VIII. WEBSTER'S PERSONALITY

"At an early age, he commanded attention by a singular charm of presence, to which his great dark eyes contributed not a little; and notwithstanding his high animal spirits, by a striking dignity of carriage and demeanor, — traits which gradually matured into that singularly imposing personality, the effect of which is described by his contemporaries in language almost extravagant, borrowing its similes from kings, cathedrals and mountain peaks." CARL SCHURZ.

"When he rose and came down to the edge of the platform, with a small roll of manuscript in his hand, at the celebration of the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument, and cast a glance at the sea of two hundred thousand faces turned up to his from the amphitheatre below, and then looked up to the monument towering above him into the bright, clear air, he *looked* the orator, if ever earthly mortal bespoke it."

Harper's Magazine, vi, 89.

IX. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF DANIEL WEBSTER

1782. January 18. Born at Salisbury, N. H.
1794. Entered Exeter Academy.
1797. Entered Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H.
1800. July 4. Delivered, before the citizens of Hanover, N. H., his first public oration.
1801. Graduated from Dartmouth College.
Taught at Fryeburg Academy, Fryeburg, Me.
1804. July. Entered a law office in Boston.
1805. March. Admitted to the bar at Boston.
1806. His father died.
1807. Transferred his law business to his brother, Ezekiel, and moved to Portsmouth, N. H.
1808. Married Grace Fletcher, of Salisbury.
Published a speech against the Embargo of 1807.
1812. July 4. Delivered an address before the Washington Benevolent Society at Portsmouth.
Fall. Elected to the Thirteenth Congress of the United States, as a Representative from New Hampshire.
1813. Appointed on the Committee on Foreign Relations.
Admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court.
1816. Moved to Boston from Portsmouth.
1817. First argument in the Dartmouth College Case in New Hampshire.
1818. Final argument in the Dartmouth College Case before the Supreme Court at Washington.
1820. Dec. 22. Delivered the Plymouth Oration.
1823. Became Member of Congress from the Boston district.
1824. Delivered a speech against the Tariff of 1824.
1825. June 17. Delivered the First Bunker Hill Oration, at Charlestown, Mass. (Boston.)
1826. Delivered his Eulogy on Adams and Jefferson.

1827. Elected United States Senator from Massachusetts.
1828. His wife died.
Delivered a speech on the Tariff of 1828.
1829. Married Caroline Le Roy, of New York.
1830. January 20. First Reply to Hayne.
January 26. Second Reply to Hayne.
1832. February 22. Delivered address on The Character of Washington at the Centennial Celebration.
1833. Answered Calhoun's nullification argument with the contention that "The Cónstitution is not a Compact between Sovereign States."
1836. Supported only by Massachusetts in his candidacy for President of the United States.
1839. Reëlected to the United States Senate.
Visited England.
1841. Resigned his seat in the Senate.
Became Secretary of State.
1843. Resigned his position in the Cabinet.
June 17. Second Bunker Hill Oration.
1844. Elected Senator from Massachusetts to take the place of Rufus Choate.
1850. Delivered the famous "Seventh of March" speech.
Resigned his seat in the Senate and again became Secretary of State.
1852. Thrown from his carriage near Marshfield, Mass., and seriously injured.
Again unsuccessful as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States.
October 24. Died at Marshfield.

X. REFERENCES ON THE LIFE OF WEBSTER

— George Ticknor Curtis, *Life of Daniel Webster*, 2 volumes. New York, 1870. D. Appleton & Co.

This is the standard Webster biography.

— Henry Cabot Lodge, *Daniel Webster* (in the *American*

Statesmen Series). Boston, 1883. Houghton Mifflin Company.

This is the best single-volume life of Webster.

— Norman Hapgood, *Daniel Webster* (in the *Beacon Biographies*). Boston, 1899. Small, Maynard & Co.

— Charles Lanman, *The Private Life of Daniel Webster*. New York, 1852. Harper & Brothers.

— Peter Harvey, *Reminiscences and Anecdotes of Daniel Webster*. Boston, 1877. Little, Brown & Co.

Interesting but not wholly trustworthy.

— S. P. Lyman, *Life and Memorials of Daniel Webster* New York, 1853. D. Appleton & Co.

These memorials were first published in the New York *Times*.

— Henry N. Hudson, *A Discourse Delivered on the Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of Daniel Webster*. Boston, 1882. Ginn & Co.

— Carl Schurz, *Daniel Webster*, in *Library of the World's Best Literature*, page 15,725.

An excellent, short, impartial account of Webster's career as an orator and statesman.

— Rufus Choate, *A Discourse Commemorative of Daniel Webster*. Boston, 1853. James Monroe & Co.

Delivered at Dartmouth College, July 27, 1853.

— E. P. Whipple, *The Great Speeches and Debates of Daniel Webster*. Boston, 1879. Little, Brown & Co.

Contains an essay on Daniel Webster as a Master of English Prose Style.

— George S. Hilliard (Editor), *A Memorial of Daniel Webster from the City of Boston*. Boston, 1853. Little, Brown & Co.

— George Ticknor Curtis, *The Last Years of Daniel Webster*. New York, 1878. D. Appleton & Co.

Contains "Webster: an Ode," by W. C. Wilkinson.

— T. H. Cummings (Editor), *The Webster Centennial*. Boston, 1883. Published by the Webster Historical Society

Contains the proceedings of the Webster Historical Society at Marshfield, Mass., October 12, 1882, with an account of other celebrations on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Webster.

— John Bach McMaster, *Daniel Webster*. New York, 1902. The Century Co.

— Everett P. Wheeler, *Daniel Webster: the Expounder of the Constitution*. New York, 1905. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

— Charles F. Richardson, *Daniel Webster for Young Americans*, with essay by E. P. Whipple on *Daniel Webster as a Master of English Prose Style*.

Magazine Articles

Harper's, VI: 85 (illustrated); LXIV: 428; *North American Review*, XLI: 231 (Everett on Webster's Style of Oratory); LIX: 44 (E. P. Whipple on Webster as an Author); CIV: 65 (by James Parton); *American Quarterly Review*, IX: 420 (by George Ticknor); XXIV: 709 (by Mellen Chamberlain); *Nineteenth Century*, XXIV: 262 (by Goldwin Smith); *U. S. Literary Gazette*, 2: 327 (August 1, 1825. Review of the Bunker Hill Oration); *Southern Literary Messenger*, IX: 749, X: 25. (Both articles are on the Bunker Hill Oration.)

XI. EDITIONS OF WEBSTER'S WORKS

Works. 6 vols. Boston, 1851. Little, Brown & Co.

The first volume contains a *Biographical Memoir of Daniel Webster*, by Edward Everett.

The text of the oration in this volume is taken, by the courteous permission of Little, Brown & Co., from the six-volume edition.

Writings and Speeches. National Edition. 18 vols. (Illustrated with portraits and plates.) Boston, 1903. Little, Brown & Co.

Private Correspondence. Edited by Fletcher Webster. Boston, 1857. Little, Brown & Co.

The First Bunker Hill Oration was published by Cummings, Hilliard & Co., of Boston, a few days after it was delivered.

XII. REFERENCES ON THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

— Justin Winsor, *Reader's Handbook of the American Revolution.* Boston, 1880. Houghton Mifflin Co.

This book (pages 35–59) gives the best list of references on the Battle of Bunker Hill.

— Richard Frothingham, Jr., *History of the Siege of Boston*, Boston, 1849. Little, Brown & Co.

This book (Chapter V) gives the best detailed account of the Battle, with a large map of Charlestown in 1775, and a plan of the *Action at Bunker Hill;* also a "Plan of the Town of Boston with the Intrenchments, &c. of His Majestys Forces in 1775."

The author quotes (p. 204) reflections on the Battle of Bunker Hill contained in the *North American Review* for October, 1818, "understood to be from the pen of Hon. Daniel Webster." Pages 337–356 give a history and description of Bunker Hill Monument. The best descriptions of the Battle are included among the letters of provincial officers and soldiers in the Appendix. Colonel Prescott's own account, in a letter dated August 25, 1775, and addressed to John Adams, is here printed. Frothingham's own description is one of the most reliable, depending, as it does, mainly on contemporary records.

— John Fiske, *The American Revolution*, 2 vols. Boston, 1891. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The first three chapters deal with the events leading to the Battle. Pages 136–146 describe the Battle. A briefer account is found in Fiske's *The War of Independence.* Boston, 1889. Houghton Mifflin Co.

— Charles P. Emmons, *Sketches of Bunker Hill Battle and Monument: with Illustrative Documents.* Charlestown, 1843.

— Henry B. Carrington, *Battles of the American Revolution.* New York, 1876. A. S. Barnes & Co.

Pages 92–116 give historical and military criticism with topographical illustration.

— C. H. Van Tyne, *The American Revolution.* New York, 1905. Harper & Brothers.

Vol. IX, Chapter II, of *The American Nation; A History.*

— A story of the Battle in verse is given by Oliver Wendell Holmes in his *Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill Battle.*

XIII. OTHER HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The Address contains numerous historical references, among them the following: discoverer of America, Plymouth, twenty-four states (in 1825), burning of Charlestown, William Prescott, Israel Putnam, John Stark, John Brooks, James Reed, Seth Pomeroy, Ebenezer Bridge, Joseph Warren, Trenton, Monmouth, Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, Saratoga, acts for altering the Government, Salem, Continental Congress, Congress of Massachusetts, Lexington and Concord, Josiah Quincy, Jr., Lafayette ("one who hears me now").

The present edition does not attempt to supply adequate historical annotation, partly because the student will profit much more by tracing these references for himself, and partly because no reasonable amount of notes can take the place of the better United States histories that are readily available. The same is true of the historical references in Washington's *Address.*

XIV. QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON THE FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION

1. What evidence is there in the different tones of the several parts of the address that the speaker had studied his audience?

2. Barrett Wendell says of the passage beginning "Venerable Men," — "However impressive you may find such work as this, you can hardly avoid feeling it to be laboriously artificial; and yet its artificiality has a ring of genuineness. It comes very near bombast, but it is not quite bombastic." Comment upon the justice of this criticism. Read also the quotation from Everett in the Notes on this passage. Could this criticism apply as justly to Washington's *Farewell Address*?

3. In the notes on Webster's Prose Style, read the criticism of Goldwin Smith, and consider to what extent the Bunker Hill oration tends to prove the criticism sound or unsound.

4. What are the seven or eight main topics of the Oration? What are the sub-topics under each main topic?

5. Contrast the prose style of Webster with that of Washington.

6. Judged by Webster's own conception of eloquence, as set forth in his own words in the Introduction, Part VII, what can you say of the First Bunker Hill Oration? Of Washington's *Farewell Address*?

7. Read an occasional address delivered within the past twenty years. (See Baker's *Forms of Public Address*, or any other collection.) Contrast the modern speech with Webster's. Contrast it with Washington's.

8. The only American specimen of commemorative oratory that equals the First Bunker Hill Oration in effectiveness is Lincoln's Gettysburg *Address*. We here give the entire address: —

"Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon

this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation — or any nation so conceived and so dedicated — can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here: but it can never forget what they did here.

"It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Compare Lincoln's address with Webster's. What similarities do you observe? What parts of the one present the most striking analogy with the other? What parallels of rhetorical treatment do you find? Try to remove a sentence from Lincoln's address and insert it where it will sound as well. Is this a good test of coherence? Try the same test of rearrangement with one of Webster's paragraphs. With one from the *Farewell Address*. With one of your own compositions.

9. Edward Everett said in 1852: —

"Whoever, in after time, shall write the history of the United States for the last forty years will write the life of Daniel Webster; and whoever writes the life of Daniel Webster as it ought to be written, will write the history of the Union from the time he took a leading part in its concerns."

Try to justify this statement from what you know of the life of Webster.

10. The *United States Literary Gazette*, for August, 1825, says of the First Bunker Hill Oration, "This address contains, in some part or other, about all the prominent doctrines which should enter into the political creed of a citizen of this country. It appears to us, that the feelings expressed in this discourse are those which arise naturally out of the conditions and institutions of our country; that the principles put forth in it are those in which all patriotic, enlightened, and high-minded Americans must cordially agree. They are not English, nor French, federal nor democratic, but American. America, 'Our Country,' is this great statesman's *Shibboleth*." Can you explain and justify this judgment by detailed references to the oration? Could this judgment be made as justly in all respects of Washington's *Address*?

11. Henry Cabot Lodge calls this address "a succession of eloquent fragments." Show concretely to what extent this opinion is or is not justified. Can the same be said of Washington's *Farewell Address*? Or of Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*? Or of the Gettysburg *Address*? Which of these addresses best conforms to the principle of unity?

12. Adaptation is said to be the secret of persuasion.[1] In what ways did Webster adapt his address to the time, the place, the audience, and the occasion?

13. One source of persuasion lies in a speaker's relation to his subject and to his audience.[1] What advantages did Webster derive from his relation to the subject and to the audience?

14. What attributes in the man himself are most effective in persuasion?[1] Which of these did Webster possess in high degree?

15. "Let our object be our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country," p. 101. This triple rhetorical form appears to have been liked by Webster. Compare the follow-

[1] These topics are discussed in the twelfth chapter of *Argumentation and Debating*. Boston, 1908. Houghton Mifflin Co.

ing: "I am born an American; I live an American; I die an American"; "One country, one constitution, one destiny"; "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish." Note also the echo in the closing words, "of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty." What other uses of this form do you find in the works of Webster? of Washington? of Lincoln? of Burke? of other writers?

16. "Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure!" p. 84. Notice the balanced sentences throughout this paragraph. What other balanced structures do you find in this address?

17. What similar balancing of parts do you find in Washington's *Address*?

18. Do you observe any characteristics of the Oration that make it better adapted for oral delivery than the *Farewell Address*?

19. Contrast the style of Washington's opening sentences with the style of Webster's opening sentences.

20. Compare the United States of 1796 with the United States of 1825 regarding number of states; political parties; population; security as a nation; freedom from entangling alliances; interstate commerce; prospects of continued peace; standard of living. Make the same comparison between the United States of 1825 and the United States of to-day.

THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

AN ADDRESS BY DANIEL WEBSTER AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE OF THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT AT CHARLESTOWN, MASS., ON THE 17TH OF JUNE, 1825.

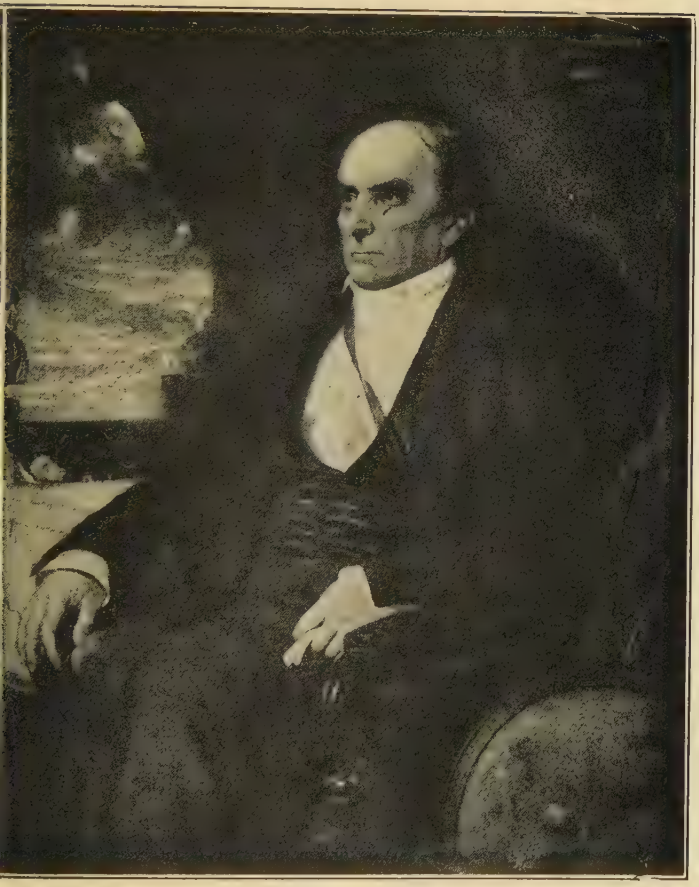
THIS uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that

we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth.

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes and our own existence. It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can



DANIEL WEBSTER

From the painting by G. P. A. Healy in the Department of State, Washington
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never be without interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient Colony forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it.[1] No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate, that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The Society whose organ I am[2] was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could

[1] An interesting account of the voyage of the early emigrants to the Maryland Colony, and of its settlement, is given in the official report of Father White, written probably within the first month after the landing at St. Mary's. The original Latin manuscript is still preserved among the archives of the Jesuits at Rome. The Ark and the Dove are remembered with scarcely less interest by the descendants of the sister colony, than is the Mayflower in New England, which thirteen years earlier, at the same season of the year, bore thither the Pilgrim Fathers.

[2] Mr. Webster was at this time President of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, chosen on the death of Governor John Brooks, the first President.

claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking, than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed, not of reason

only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it for ever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power are still strong. We wish that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling

of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important that they might crowd and distinguish centuries are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life. When has it happened that history has had so much to record, in the same term of years, as since the 17th of June, 1775? Our own revolution, which, under other circumstances, might itself have been expected to occasion a war of half a century, has been achieved; twenty-four sovereign and independent States erected; and a general government established over them, so safe, so wise, so free, so practical, that we might well wonder its establishment should have been accomplished so soon, were it not far the greater wonder that it should have been established at all. Two or three millions of people have been augmented to twelve, the great forests of the West prostrated beneath the arm of successful industry, and the dwellers on the banks of the Ohio and the Mississippi become the fellow-citizens and neighbors of those who cultivate the hills of New England.[1] We have a commerce

[1] That which was spoken of figuratively in 1825 has, in the lapse of a quarter of a century, by the introduction of railroads and telegraphic lines, become a reality. It is an interesting circumstance, that the first railroad on the Western Continent was constructed for the purpose of accelerating the erection of this monument. — *Edward Everett, in* 1851.

that leaves no sea unexplored; navies which take no law from superior force; revenues adequate to all the exigencies of government, almost without taxation; and peace with all nations, founded on equal rights and mutual respect.

Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones which had stood tranquil for ages. On this, our continent, our own example has been followed, and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun; and at this moment the dominion of European power in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever.[1]

In the mean time, both in Europe and America, such has been the general progress of knowledge, such the improvement in legislation, in commerce, in the arts, in letters, and, above all, in liberal ideas and the general spirit of the age, that the whole world seems changed.

Yet, notwithstanding that this is but a faint abstract of the things which have happened since the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, we are but fifty years removed from it; and we now stand here to enjoy all the blessings of our own condition, and to look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world, while we still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here,

[1] This has special reference to the Monroe Doctrine, then fresh in the minds of Mr. Webster and his hearers.

from every quarter of New England, to visit once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

VENERABLE MEN! you have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death; — all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and

defence.[1] All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amid this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

"another morn,
Risen on mid-noon;"

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

But, ah! Him! the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the

[1] It is necessary to inform those only who are unacquainted with the localities, that the United States Navy Yard at Charlestown is situated at the base of Bunker Hill.

hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! — how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name![1] Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit.

But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary army.

VETERANS! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. VETERANS OF HALF A CENTURY! when in your youthful days you put every thing at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude.

[1] The name of Joseph Warren was very dear to Americans of Webster's day.

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embráces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad upon the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind!

The occasion does not require of me any particular account of the battle of the 17th of June, 1775, nor any detailed narrative of the events which immediately preceded it. These are familiarly known to all. In the progress of the great and interesting controversy, Massachusetts and the town of Boston had become early and marked objects of the displeasure of the British Parliament. This had been manifested in the act for altering the government of the Province, and in that for shutting up the port of Boston. Nothing sheds more honor on our early history, and nothing better shows how little the feelings and sentiments of the Colonies were known or regarded in England, than the impression which these measures everywhere produced in America. It had been anti-

cipated, that while the Colonies in general would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns would be greedily enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intenseness of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people! Everywhere the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, everywhere, to show to the whole world that the Colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. The temptation to profit by the punishment of Boston was strongest to our neighbors of Salem. Yet Salem was precisely the place where this miserable proffer was spurned, in a tone of the most lofty self-respect and the most indignant patriotism. "We are deeply affected," said its inhabitants, "with the sense of our public calamities; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the Province greatly excite our commiseration. By shutting up the port of Boston some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither and to our benefit; but we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge a thought to seize on wealth and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbors." These noble sentiments were not confined to our immediate vicinity. In that day of general affection and brotherhood, the blow given to Boston smote on every patriotic heart from one

end of the country to the other. Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as Connecticut and New Hampshire, felt and proclaimed the cause to be their own. The Continental Congress, then holding its first session in Philadelphia, expressed its sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston, and addresses were received from all quarters, assuring them that the cause was a common one, and should be met by common efforts and common sacrifices. The Congress of Massachusetts responded to these assurances; and in an address to the Congress at Philadelphia, bearing the official signature, perhaps among the last, of the immortal Warren, notwithstanding the severity of its suffering and the magnitude of the dangers which threatened it, it was declared that this Colony "is ready, at all times, to spend and to be spent in the cause of America."

But the hour drew nigh which was to put professions to the proof, and to determine whether the authors of these mutual pledges were ready to seal them in blood. The tidings of Lexington and Concord had no sooner spread, than it was universally felt that the time was at last come for action. A spirit pervaded all ranks, not transient, not boisterous, but deep, solemn, determined, —

"Totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet."[1]

War on their own soil and at their own doors, was indeed, a strange work to the yeomanry of New England; but their consciences were convinced of its necessity, their country called them to it, and they did not withhold themselves from the perilous trial. The

[1] "And a Mind, diffused throughout the members, gives energy to the whole mass, and mingles with the vast body."

ordinary occupations of life were abandoned; the plough was stayed in the unfinished furrow; wives gave up their husbands, and mothers gave up their sons, to the battles of a civil war. Death might come in honor, on the field; it might come, in disgrace, on the scaffold. For either and for both they were prepared. The sentiment of Quincy was full in their hearts. "Blandishments," said that distinguished son of genius and patriotism, "will not fascinate us, nor will threats of a halter intimidate; for, under God, we are determined, that, wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever, we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men."

The 17th of June saw the four New England Colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or to fall together; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them for ever, — one cause, one country, one heart.

The battle of Bunker Hill was attended with the most important effects beyond its immediate results as a military engagement. It created at once a state of open, public war. There could now be no longer a question of proceeding against individuals, as guilty of treason or rebellion. That fearful crisis was past. The appeal lay to the sword, and the only question was, whether the spirit and the resources of the people would hold out till the object should be accomplished. Nor were its general consequences confined to our own country. The previous proceedings of the Colonies, their appeals, resolutions, and addresses, had made their cause known to Europe. Without boasting, we may say, that in no age or country has the public cause been maintained with more force of argument, more power of illustration, or more of that persuasion

which excited feeling and elevated principle can alone bestow, than the Revolutionary state papers exhibit. These papers will forever deserve to be studied, not only for the spirit which they breathe, but for the ability with which they were written.

To this able vindication of their cause, the Colonies had now added a practical and severe proof of their own true devotion to it, and given evidence also of the power which they could bring to its support. All now saw, that if America fell, she would not fall without a struggle. Men felt sympathy and regard, as well as surprise, when they beheld these infant states, remote, unknown, unaided, encounter the power of England, and, in the first considerable battle, leave more of their enemies dead on the field, in proportion to the number of combatants, than had been recently known to fall in the wars of Europe.

Information of these events, circulating throughout the world, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me.[1] He has not forgotten the emotion which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. But, Sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

[1] Among the earliest of the arrangements for the celebration of the 17th of June, 1825, was the invitation to General Lafayette to be present; and he had so timed his progress through the other States as to return to Massachusetts in season for the great occasion.

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, Sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor; and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give then this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more

immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. "*Serus in cœlum redeas.*"[1] Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, O, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

The leading reflection to which this occasion seems to invite us, respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowledge has, in our time, triumphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not

[1] "Late may you return to heaven."

be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the world will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country, every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half-century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors or fellow-workers on the theatre of intellectual operation.

From these causes important improvements have taken place in the personal condition of individuals. Generally speaking, mankind are not only better fed and better clothed, but they are able also to enjoy more leisure; they possess more refinement and more self-respect. A superior tone of education, manners, and habits prevails. This remark, most true in its application to our own country, is also partly true when applied elsewhere. It is proved by the vastly augmented consumption of those articles of manufacture and of commerce which contribute to the comforts and the decencies of life; an augmentation which has far outrun the progress of population. And while the unexampled and almost incredible use of machinery would seem to supply the place of labor, labor still finds its occupation and its reward; so wisely has

Providence adjusted men's wants and desires to their condition and their capacity.

Any adequate survey, however, of the progress made during the last half-century in the polite and the mechanic arts, in machinery and manufactures, in commerce and agriculture, in letters and in science, would require volumes. I must abstain wholly from these subjects, and turn for a moment to the contemplation of what has been done on the great question of politics and government. This is the master topic of the age; and during the whole fifty years it has intensely occupied the thoughts of men. The nature of civil government, its ends and uses, have been canvassed and investigated; ancient opinions attacked and defended; new ideas recommended and resisted, by whatever power the mind of man could bring to the controversy. From the closet and the public halls the debate has been transferred to the field; and the world has been shaken by wars of unexampled magnitude, and the greatest variety of fortune. A day of peace has at length succeeded; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society. And, without dwelling on particular circumstances, it is most apparent, that, from the before-mentioned causes of augmented knowledge and improved individual condition, a real, substantial, and important change has taken place, and is taking place, highly favorable, on the whole, to human liberty and human happiness.

The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent,

from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse; it whirled along with a fearful celerity; till at length, like the chariot-wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for setting the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great degree of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our Colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well-founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances

less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the masterwork of the world, to establish governments entirely popular on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, in a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its own power; all its ends become means; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has limited, and nothing can limit, the amount of ultimate product.

Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think, and to reason, on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak

out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

When Louis the Fourteenth said, "I am the State," he expressed the essence of the doctrine of unlimited power. By the rules of that system, the people are disconnected from the state; they are its subjects, it is their lord. These ideas, founded in the love of power, and long supported by the excess and the abuse of it, are yielding, in our age, to other opinions; and the civilized world seems at last to be proceeding to the conviction of that fundamental and manifest truth, that the powers of government are but a trust, and that they cannot be lawfully exercised but for the good of the community. As knowledge is more and more extended, this conviction becomes more and more general. Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams. The prayer of the Grecian champion, when enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness, is the appropriate political supplication for the people of every country not yet blessed with free institutions: —

> "Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore,
> Give me TO SEE, — and Ajax asks no more."

We may hope that the growing influence of enlightened sentiment will promote the permanent peace of the world. Wars to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, and to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute, that every nation possesses the power of establishing a govern-

ment for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, or to execute the system of pacification by force; and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greek at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it.

It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that, while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction in our undertaking to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. Let her be assured, that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its in-

herent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

Among the great events of the half-century, we must reckon, certainly, the revolution of South America; and we are not likely to overrate the importance of that revolution, either to the people of the country itself or to the rest of the world. The late Spanish colonies, now independent states, under circumstances less favorable, doubtless, than attended our own revolution, have yet successfully commenced their national existence. They have accomplished the great object of establishing their independence; they are known and acknowledged in the world; and although in regard to their systems of government, their sentiments on religious toleration, and their provision for public instruction, they may have yet much to learn, it must be admitted that they have risen to the condition of settled and established states more rapidly than could have been reasonably anticipated. They already furnish an exhilarating example of the difference between free governments and despotic misrule. Their commerce, at this moment, creates a new activity in all the great marts of the world. They show themselves able, by an exchange of commodities, to bear a useful part in the intercourse of nations.

A new spirit of enterprise and industry begins to prevail; all the great interests of society receive a salutary impulse; and the progress of information not only testifies to an improved condition, but itself constitutes the highest and most essential improvement.

When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the

civilized world. The thirteen little colonies of North America habitually called themselves the "continent." Borne down by colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there has been, as it were, a new creation. The southern hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

And now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing conditions, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the repre-

sentative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed, that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief, that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The principle of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of

improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever!

THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON[1]

AN ADDRESS BY DANIEL WEBSTER IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, FEB. 22, 1832, THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON'S BIRTH

We are met to testify our regard for him whose name is intimately blended with whatever belongs most essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, the free institutions, and the renown of our country. That name was of power to rally a nation, in the hour of thick-thronging public disasters and calamities; that name shone, amid the storm of war, a beacon light, to cheer and guide the country's friends; it flamed, too, like a meteor, to repel her foes. That name, in the days of peace, was a loadstone, attracting to itself a whole people's confidence, a whole people's love, and the whole world's respect. That name, descending with all time, spreading over the whole earth, and uttered in all the languages belonging to the tribes and races of men, will forever be pronounced with affectionate gratitude by every one in whose breast there shall arise an aspiration for human rights and human liberty.

We perform this grateful duty, Gentlemen, at the expiration of a hundred years from his birth, near the place, so cherished and beloved by him, where his dust now reposes, and in the capital which bears his own immortal name.

[1] From *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*, National Edition, Volume II. Copyright, 1903, by Little, Brown & Co. Used by special permission.

All experience evinces that human sentiments are strongly influenced by associations. The recurrence of anniversaries, or of longer periods of time, naturally freshens the recollection, and deepens the impression, of events with which they are historically connected. Renowned places, also, have a power to awaken feeling, which all acknowledge. No American can pass by the fields of Bunker Hill, Monmouth, and Camden, as if they were ordinary spots on the earth's surface. Whoever visits them feels the sentiment of love of country kindling anew, as if the spirit that belonged to the transactions which have rendered these places distinguished still hovered round, with power to move and excite all who in future time may approach them.

But neither of these sources of emotion equals the power with which great moral examples affect the mind. When sublime virtues cease to be abstractions, when they become embodied in human character, and exemplified in human conduct, we should be false to our own nature if we did not indulge in the spontaneous effusions of our gratitude and our admiration. A true lover of the virtue of patriotism delights to contemplate its purest models; and that love of country may be well suspected which affects to soar so high into the regions of sentiment as to be lost and absorbed in the abstract feeling, and becomes too elevated or too refined to glow with fervor in the commendation or the love of individual benefactors. All this is unnatural. It is as if one should be so enthusiastic a lover of poetry as to care nothing for Homer or Milton; so passionately attached to eloquence as to be indifferent to Tully and Chatham; or such a devotee to the arts, in such an ecstasy with the elements of beauty, proportion, and expression, as to regard the master-

pieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo with coldness or contempt. We may be assured, Gentlemen, that he who really loves the thing itself, loves its finest exhibitions. A true friend of his country loves her friends and benefactors, and thinks it no degradation to commend and commemorate them. The voluntary outpouring of the public feeling, made to-day, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, proves this sentiment to be both just and natural. In the cities and in the villages, in the public temples and in the family circles, among all ages and sexes, gladdened voices to-day bespeak grateful hearts and a freshened recollection of the virtues of the Father of his Country. And it will be so, in all time to come, so long as public virtue is itself an object of regard. The ingenuous youth of America will hold up to themselves the bright model of Washington's example, and study to be what they behold; they will contemplate his character till all its virtues spread out and display themselves to their delighted vision; as the earliest astronomers, the shepherds on the plains of Babylon, gazed at the stars till they saw them form into clusters and constellations, overpowering at length the eyes of the beholders with the united blaze of a thousand lights.

Gentlemen, we are at a point of a century from the birth of Washington; and what a century it has been! During its course, the human mind has seemed to proceed with a sort of geometric velocity, accomplishing for human intelligence and human freedom more than had been done in fives or tens of centuries preceding. Washington stands at the commencement of a new era, as well as at the head of the New World. A century from the birth of Washington has changed the world. The country of Washington has been the thea-

tre on which a great part of that change has been wrought and Washington himself a principal agent by which it has been accomplished. His age and his country are equally full of wonders; and of both he is the chief.

If the poetical prediction, uttered a few years before his birth, be true; if indeed it be designed by Providence that the grandest exhibition of human character and human affairs shall be made on this theatre of the Western world; if it be true that, —

> "The four first acts already past,
> A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last";—

how could this imposing, swelling, final scene be appropriately opened, how could its intense interest be adequately sustained, but by the introduction of just such a character as our Washington?

Washington had attained his manhood when that spark of liberty was struck out in his own country which has since kindled into a flame and shot its beams over the earth. In the flow of a century from his birth, the world has changed in science, in arts, in the extent of commerce, in the improvement of navigation, and in all that relates to the civilization of man. But it is the spirit of human freedom, the new elevation of individual man, in his moral, social, and political character, leading the whole long train of other improvements, which has most remarkably distinguished the era. Society, in this century, has not made its progress, like Chinese skill, by a greater acuteness of ingenuity in trifles; it has not merely lashed itself to an increased speed round the old circles of thought and action; but it has assumed a new character; it has raised itself from *beneath* govern-

ments to a participation *in* governments; it has mixed moral and political objects with the daily pursuits of individual men; and, with a freedom and strength before altogether unknown, it has applied to these objects the whole power of the human understanding. It has been the era, in short, when the social principle has triumphed over the feudal principle; when society has maintained its rights against military power, and established, on foundations never hereafter to be shaken, its competency to govern itself.

It was the extraordinary fortune of Washington, that, having been intrusted, in revolutionary times, with the supreme military command, and having fulfilled that trust with equal renown for wisdom and for valor, he should be placed at the head of the first government in which an attempt was to be made on a large scale to rear the fabric of social order on the basis of a written constitution and of a pure representative principle. A government was to be established, without a throne, without an aristocracy, without castes, orders, or privileges; and this government, instead of being a democracy existing and acting within the walls of a single city, was to be extended over a vast country of different climates, interests, and habits, and of various communions of our common Christian faith. The experiment certainly was entirely new. A popular government of this extent, it was evident, could be framed only by carrying into full effect the principle of representation or of delegated power; and the world was to see whether society could, by the strength of this principle, maintain its own peace and good government, carry forward its own great interests, and conduct itself to political renown and glory. By the benignity of Providence, this experiment, so

full of interest to us and to our posterity forever, so full of interest, indeed, to the world in its present generation and in all its generations to come, was suffered to commence under the guidance of Washington. Destined for this high career, he was fitted for it by wisdom, by virtue, by patriotism, by discretion, by whatever can inspire confidence in man toward man. In entering on the untried scenes, early disappointment and the premature extinction of all hope of success would have been certain, had it not been that there did exist throughout the country, in a most extraordinary degree, an unwavering trust in him who stood at the helm.

I remarked, Gentlemen, that the whole world was and is interested in the result of this experiment. And is it not so? Do we deceive ourselves, or is it true that at this moment the career which this government is running is among the most attractive objects to the civilized world? Do we deceive ourselves, or is it true that at this moment that love of liberty and that understanding of its true principles which are flying over the whole earth, as on the wings of all the winds, are really and truly of American origin?

At the period of the birth of Washington there existed in Europe no political liberty in large communities, except in the provinces of Holland, and except that England herself had set a great example, so far as it went, by her glorious Revolution of 1688. Everywhere else despotic power was predominant, and the feudal or military principle held the mass of mankind in hopeless bondage. One-half of Europe was crushed beneath the Bourbon sceptre, and no conception of political liberty, no hope even of religious toleration, existed among that nation which was America's first

ally. The king was the state, the king was the country, the king was all. There was one king, with power not derived from his people, and too high to be questioned; and the rest were all subjects, with no political right but obedience. All above was intangible power, all below quiet subjection. A recent occurrence in the French chamber shows us how public opinion on these subjects is changed. A minister had spoken of the "king's subjects." "There are no subjects," exclaimed hundreds of voices at once, "in a country where the people make the king!"

Gentlemen, the spirit of human liberty and of free government, nurtured and grown into strength and beauty in America, has stretched its course into the midst of the nations. Like an emanation from Heaven, it has gone forth, and it will not return void. It must change, it is fast changing, the face of the earth. Our great, our high duty is to show, in our own example, that this spirit is a spirit of health as well as a spirit of power; that its benignity is as great as its strength; that its efficiency to secure individual rights, social relations, and moral order, is equal to the irresistible force with which it prostrates principalities and powers. The world, at this moment, is regarding us with a willing, but something of a fearful admiration. Its deep and awful anxiety is to learn whether free States may be stable, as well as free; whether popular power may be trusted, as well as feared; in short, whether wise, regular, and virtuous self-government is a vision for the contemplation of theorists, or a truth established, illustrated, and brought into practice in the country of Washington.

Gentlemen, for the earth which we inhabit, and the whole circle of the sun, for all the unborn races of

mankind, we seem to hold in our hands, for their weal or woe, the fate of this experiment. If we fail, who shall venture the repetition? If our example shall prove to be one not of encouragement, but of terror, not fit to be imitated, but fit only to be shunned, where else shall the world look for free models? If this great *Western Sun* be struck out of the firmament, at what other fountain shall the lamp of liberty hereafter be lighted? What other orb shall emit a ray to glimmer, even, on the darkness of the world?

There is no danger of our overrating or overstating the important part which we are now acting in human affairs. It should not flatter our personal self-respect, but it should reanimate our patriotic virtues, and inspire us with a deeper and more solemn sense both of our privileges and of our duties. We cannot wish better for our country, nor for the world, than that the same spirit which influenced Washington may influence all who succeed him; and that the same blessing from above, which attended his efforts, may also attend theirs.

The principles of Washington's administration are not left doubtful. They are to be found in the Constitution itself, in the great measures recommended and approved by him, in his speeches to Congress, and in that most interesting paper, his *Farewell Address* to the people of the United States. The success of the government under his administration is the highest proof of the soundness of these principles. And, after an experience of thirty-five years, what is there which an enemy could condemn? What is there which either his friends, or the friends of the country, could wish to have been otherwise? I speak, of course, of great measures and leading principles.

In the first place, all his measures were right in their intent. He stated the whole basis of his own great character, when he told the country, in the homely phrase of the proverb, that honesty is the best policy. One of the most striking things ever said of him is, that "*he changed mankind's ideas of political greatness.*" To commanding talents, and to success, the common elements of such greatness, he added a disregard of self, a spotlessness of motive, a steady submission to every public and private duty, which threw far into the shade the whole crowd of vulgar great. The object of his regard was the whole country. No part of it was enough to fill his enlarged patriotism. His love of glory, so far as that may be supposed to have influenced him at all, spurned everything short of general approbation. It would have been nothing to him that his partisans or his favorites outnumbered, or outvoted, or outmanaged, or outclamored, those of other leaders. He had no favorites; he rejected all partisanship; and, acting honestly for the universal good, he deserved, what he has so richly enjoyed, the universal love.

His principle it was to act right, and to trust the people for support; his principle it was not to follow the lead of sinister and selfish ends, nor to rely on the little arts of party delusion to obtain public sanction for such a course. Born for his country and for the world, he did not give up to party what was meant for mankind. The consequence is, that his fame is as durable as his principles, as lasting as truth and virtue themselves. While the hundreds whom party excitement, and temporary circumstances, and casual combinations, have raised into transient notoriety, sink again, like thin bubbles, bursting and dissolving into

the great ocean, Washington's fame is like the rock which bounds that ocean, and at whose feet its billows are destined to break harmlessly forever.

The maxims upon which Washington conducted our foreign relations were few and simple. The first was an entire and indisputable impartiality towards foreign States. He adhered to this rule of public conduct, against very strong inducements to depart from it, and when the popularity of the moment seemed to favor such a departure. In the next place, he maintained true dignity and unsullied honor in all communications with foreign States. It was among the high duties devolved upon him to introduce our new government into the circle of civilized States and powerful nations. Not arrogant or assuming, with no unbecoming or supercilious bearing, he yet exacted for it from all others entire and punctilious respect. He demanded, and he obtained at once, a standing of perfect equality for his country in the society of nations; nor was there a prince or potentate of his day, whose personal character carried with it, into the intercourse of other States, a greater degree of respect and veneration.

He regarded other nations only as they stood in political relations to us. With their internal affairs, their political parties and dissensions, he scrupulously abstained from all interference; and, on the other hand, he repelled with spirit all such interference by others with us or our concerns. His sternest rebuke, the most indignant measure of his whole administration, was aimed against such an attempted interference. He felt it as an attempt to wound the national honor, and resented it accordingly.

The reiterated admonitions in his *Farewell Address* show his deep fears that foreign influence would in-

sinuate itself into our counsels through the channels of domestic dissension, and obtain a sympathy with our own temporary parties. Against all such dangers he most earnestly entreats the country to guard itself. He appeals to its patriotism, to its self-respect, to its own honor, to every consideration connected with its welfare and happiness, to resist, at the very beginning, all tendencies towards such connection of foreign interests with our own affairs. With a tone of earnestness nowhere else found, even in his last affectionate farewell advice to his countrymen, he says, "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens), the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

Lastly, on the subject of foreign relations, Washington never forgot that we had interests peculiar to ourselves. The primary political concerns of Europe, he saw, did not affect us. We had nothing to do with her balance of power, her family compacts, or her successions to thrones. We were placed in a condition favorable to neutrality during European wars, and to the enjoyment of all the great advantages of that relation. "Why, then," he asks us, "why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?"

Indeed, Gentlemen, Washington's *Farewell Address* is full of truths important at all times, and particularly deserving consideration at the present. With a sagacity which brought the future before him, and made it

like the present, he saw and pointed out the dangers that even at this moment most imminently threaten us. I hardly know how a greater service of that kind could now be done to the community, than by a renewed and wide diffusion of that admirable paper, and an earnest invitation to every man in the country to reperuse and consider it. Its political maxims are invaluable; its exhortations to love of country and to brotherly affection among citizens, touching; and the solemnity with which it urges the observance of moral duties, and impresses the power of religious obligation, gives to it the highest character of truly disinterested, sincere, parental advice.

The domestic policy of Washington found its pole-star in the avowed objects of the Constitution itself. He sought so to administer that Constitution as to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. These were objects interesting, in the highest degree, to the whole country, and his policy embraced the whole country.

Among his earliest and most important duties was the organization of the government itself, the choice of his confidential advisers, and the various appointments to office. This duty, so important and delicate, when a whole government was to be organized, and all its offices for the first time filled, was yet not difficult to him; for he had no sinister ends to accomplish, no clamorous partisans to gratify, no pledges to redeem, no object to be regarded but simply the public good. It was a plain, straightforward matter, a mere honest choice of good men for the public service.

His own singleness of purpose, his disinterested pa-

triotism, were evinced by the selection of his first cabinet, and by the manner in which he filled the seats of justice, and other places of high trust. He sought for men fit for offices; not for offices which might suit men. Above personal considerations, above local considerations, above party considerations, he felt that he could only discharge the sacred trust which the country had placed in his hands, by a diligent inquiry after real merit, and a conscientious preference of virtue and talent. The whole country was the field of his selection. He explored that whole field, looking only for whatever it contained most worthy and distinguished. He was, indeed, most successful, and he deserved success for the purity of his motives, the liberality of his sentiments, and his enlarged and manly policy.

Washington's administration established the national credit, made provision for the public debt, and for that patriotic army whose interests and welfare were always so dear to him; and, by laws wisely framed, and of admirable effect, raised the commerce and navigation of the country, almost at once, from depression and ruin to a state of prosperity. Nor were his eyes open to these interests alone. He viewed with equal concern its agriculture and manufactures, and, so far as they came within the regular exercise of the powers of this government, they experienced regard and favor.

It should not be omitted, even in this slight reference to the general measures and general principles of the first President, that he saw and felt the full value and importance of the judicial department of the government. An upright and able administration of the laws he held to be alike indispensable to private happiness and public liberty. The temple of justice, in

his opinion, was a sacred place, and he would profane and pollute it who should call any to minister in it, not spotless in character, not incorruptible in integrity, not competent by talent and learning, not a fit object of unhesitating trust.

Among other admonitions, Washington has left us, in his last communication to his country, an exhortation against the excesses of party spirit. A fire not to be quenched, he yet conjures us not to fan and feed the flame. Undoubtedly, Gentlemen, it is the greatest danger of our system and of our time. Undoubtedly, if that system should be overthrown, it will be the work of excessive party spirit, acting on the government, which is dangerous enough, or acting *in* the government, which is a thousand times more dangerous; for government then becomes nothing but organized party, and, in the strange vicissitudes of human affairs, it may come at last, perhaps, to exhibit the singular paradox of government itself being in opposition to its own powers, at war with the very elements of its own existence. Such cases are hopeless. As men may be protected against murder, but cannot be guarded against suicide, so government may be shielded from the assaults of external foes, but nothing can save it when it chooses to lay violent hands on itself.

Finally, Gentlemen, there was in the breast of Washington one sentiment so deeply felt, so constantly uppermost, that no proper occasion escaped without its utterance. From the letter which he signed in behalf of the Convention when the Constitution was sent out to the people, to the moment when he put his hand to that last paper in which he addressed his countrymen, the Union, — the Union was the great object of his thoughts. In that first letter he tells them that to

him and his brethren of the Convention, union appears to be the greatest interest of every true American; and in that last paper he conjures them to regard that unity of government which constitutes them one people as the very palladium of their prosperity and safety, and the security of liberty itself. He regarded the union of these States less as one of our blessings, than as the great treasure-house which contained them all. Here, in his judgment, was the great magazine of all our means of prosperity; here, as he thought, and as every true American still thinks, are deposited all our animating prospects, all our solid hopes for future greatness. He has taught us to maintain this union, not by seeking to enlarge the powers of the government, on the one hand, nor by surrendering them, on the other; but by an administration of them at once firm and moderate, pursuing objects truly national, and carried on in a spirit of justice and equity.

The extreme solicitude for the preservation of the Union, at all times manifested by him, shows not only the opinion he entertained of its importance, but his clear perception of those causes which were likely to spring up to endanger it, and which, if once they should overthrow the present system, would leave little hope of any future beneficial reunion. Of all the presumptions indulged by presumptuous man, that is one of the rashest which looks for repeated and favorable opportunities for the deliberate establishment of a united government over distinct and widely extended communities. Such a thing has happened once in human affairs, and but once; the event stands out as a prominent exception to all ordinary history; and unless we suppose ourselves running into an age of miracles, we may not expect its repetition.

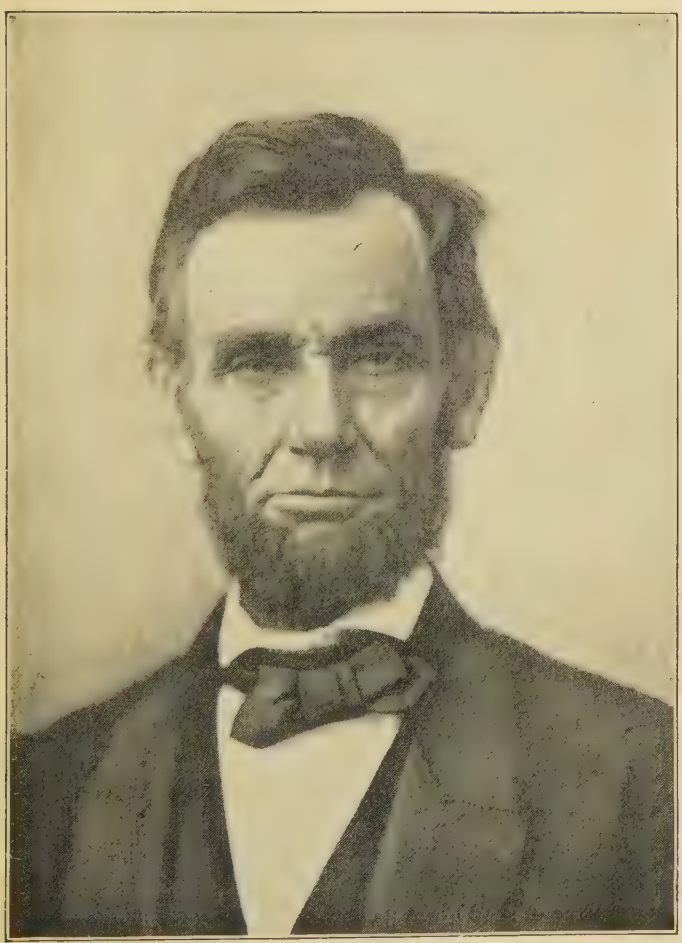
Washington, therefore, could regard, and did regard, nothing as of paramount political interest but the integrity of the Union itself. With a united government, well administered, he saw that we had nothing to fear; and without it, nothing to hope. The sentiment is just, and its momentous truth should solemnly impress the whole country. If we might regard our country as personated in the spirit of Washington, if we might consider him as representing her, in her past renown, her present prosperity, and her future career, and as in that character demanding of us all to account for our conduct, as political men or as private citizens, how should he answer him who has ventured to talk of disunion and dismemberment? Or how should he answer him who dwells perpetually on local interests, and fans every kindling flame of local prejudice? How should he answer him who would array State against State, interest against interest, and party against party, careless of the continuance of that unity of government which constitutes us one people?

The political prosperity which this country has attained, and which it now enjoys, has been acquired mainly through the instrumentality of the present government. While this agent continues, the capacity of attaining to still higher degrees of prosperity exists also. We have, while this lasts, a political life capable of beneficial exertion, with power to resist or overcome misfortunes, to sustain us against the ordinary accidents of human affairs, and to promote, by active efforts, every public interest. But dismemberment strikes at the very being which preserves these faculties. It would lay its rude and ruthless hand on this great agent itself. It would sweep away, not only

what we possess, but all power of regaining lost, or acquiring new possessions. It would leave the country not only bereft of its prosperity and happiness, but without limbs, or organs, or faculties, by which to exert itself hereafter in the pursuit of that prosperity and happiness.

Other misfortunes may be borne, or their effects overcome. If disastrous war should sweep our commerce from the ocean, another generation may renew it; if it exhaust our treasury, future industry may replenish it; if it desolate and lay waste our fields, still, under a new cultivation, they will grow green again, and ripen to future harvests. It were but a trifle even if the walls of yonder Capitol were to crumble, if its lofty pillars should fall, and its gorgeous decorations be all covered by the dust of the valley. All these might be rebuilt. But who shall reconstruct the fabric of demolished government? Who shall rear again the well-proportioned columns of constitutional liberty? Who shall frame together the skilful architecture which unites national sovereignty with State rights, individual security, and public prosperity? No, if these columns fall, they will be raised not again. Like the Coliseum and the Parthenon, they will be destined to a mournful, a melancholy immortality. Bitterer tears, however, will flow over them than were ever shed over the monuments of Roman or Grecian art; for they will be the remnants of a more glorious edifice than Greece or Rome ever saw, the edifice of constitutional American liberty.

But let us hope for better things. Let us trust in that gracious Being who has hitherto held our country as in the hollow of his hand. Let us trust to the virtue and the intelligence of the people, and to the



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1864

efficacy of religious obligation. Let us trust to the influence of Washington's example. Let us hope that that fear of Heaven which expels all other fear, and that regard to duty which transcends all other regard, may influence public men and private citizens, and lead our country still onward in her happy career. Full of these gratifying anticipations and hopes, let us look forward to the end of that century which is now commenced. A hundred years hence, other disciples of Washington will celebrate his birth, with no less of sincere admiration than we now commemorate it. When they shall meet, as we now meet, to do themselves and him that honor, so surely as they shall see the blue summits of his native mountains rise in the horizon, so surely as they shall behold the river on whose banks he lived, and on whose banks he rests, still flowing on toward the sea, so surely may they see, as we now see, the flag of the Union floating on the top of the Capitol; and then, as now, may the sun in his course visit no land more free, more happy, more lovely, than this our own country!

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Born in a log-cabin near Hodgensville, now Larue County, Kentucky . . . . . February 12, 1809
His father moves with his family into the wilderness near Gentryville, Indiana 1816
His mother dies, at the age of 35 1818
His father's second marriage 1819
Walks nine miles a day, going to and returning from school . 1826
Makes a trip to New Orleans and back, at work on a flat-boat 1828
Drives in an ox-cart with his father and stepmother to a clearing on the Sangamon River, near Decatur, Illinois . . 1829
Splits rails, to surround the clearing with a fence . . . 1829
Makes another flat-boat trip to New Orleans and back, on which trip he first sees negroes shackled together in chains, and forms his opinions concerning slavery . . . May, 1831
Begins work in a store at New Salem, Illinois . . August, 1831
Enlists in the Black Hawk War; elected a captain of volunteers 1832
Announces himself a Whig candidate for the Legislature, and is defeated 1832
Storekeeper, Postmaster, and Surveyor 1833
Elected to the Illinois Legislature 1834
Reëlected to the Legislature . . . . . 1835 to 1842
Studies law at Springfield 1837
Is a Presidential elector on the Whig national ticket . . 1840
Marries Mary Todd . . . . . November 4, 1842
Canvasses Illinois for Henry Clay 1844
Elected to Congress 1846
Supports General Taylor for President 1848
Engages in law practice 1849–1854
Debates with Douglas at Peoria and Springfield . . . 1855
Aids in organizing the Republican party . . . 1855–1856
Joint debates in Illinois with Stephen A. Douglas . . . 1858

Makes political speeches in Ohio 1859
Visits New York, and speaks at Cooper Union . February, 1860
Attends Republican State Convention at Decatur; declared to be the choice of Illinois for the Presidency . . May, 1860
Nominated at Chicago as the Republican candidate for President . . . . . May 16, 1860
Elected President over J. C. Breckenridge, Stephen A. Douglas, and John Bell . . . . . November, 1860
Inaugurated President . . . . . March 4, 1861
Issues first order for troops to put down the Rebellion, April 15, 1861
Urges McClellan to advance . . . . . April, 1862
Appeals for the support of border States to the Union cause, March to July, 1862
Calls for 300,000 more troops . . . . . July, 1862
Issues Emancipation Proclamation . . . January 1, 1863
Thanks Grant for capture of Vicksburg . . . . July, 1863
His address at Gettysburg . . . . . November 19, 1863
Calls for 500,000 volunteers . . . . . July, 1864
Renominated and reëlected President 1864
Thanks Sherman for capture of Atlanta . . . September, 1864
His second inauguration . . . . . March 4, 1865
Assassinated . . . . . April 14, 1865

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S SPEECH

AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NATIONAL CEMETERY, GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA, NOVEMBER 19, 1863.

The great battles fought at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in July, 1863, made that spot historic ground. It was early perceived that the battles were critical, and they are now looked upon by many as the turning-point of the war for the Union. The ground where the fiercest conflict raged was taken for a national cemetery, and the dedication of the place was made an occasion of great solemnity. The orator of the day was Edward Everett, who was regarded as the most finished public speaker in the country. Mr. Everett made a long and eloquent address, and was followed by the President in a little speech which instantaneously affected the country, whether people were educated or unlettered, as a great speech. The impression created has deepened with time. Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essay on *Eloquence* says: "I believe it to be true that when any orator at the bar or the Senate rises in his thought, he descends in his language, that is, when he rises to any height of thought or passion, he comes down to a language level with the ear of all his audience. It is the merit of John Brown and of Abraham Lincoln — one at Charlestown, one at Gettysburg — in the two best specimens of eloquence we have had in this country."

It is worth while to listen to Mr. Lincoln's own account of the education which prepared him for public speaking. Before he was nominated for the presidency he had attracted the notice of people by a remarkable contest in debate with a famous Illinois statesman, Stephen Arnold Douglas. As a consequence Mr. Lincoln received a great many invitations to speak in the Eastern States, and made, among others, a notable speech at the Cooper Union, New York. Shortly after, he spoke also at New Haven, and the Rev. J. P. Gulliver, in a paper in the *New York*

Independent, Sept. 1, 1864, thus reports a conversation which he held with him when traveling in the same railroad car : —

"'Ah, that reminds me,' he said, 'of a most extraordinary circumstance, which occurred in New Haven, the other day. They told me that the Professor of Rhetoric in Yale College — a very learned man, is n't he ?' 'Yes, sir, and a very fine critic, too.' 'Well, I suppose so ; he ought to be, at any rate — They told me that he came to hear me and took notes of my speech, and gave a lecture on it to his class the next day ; and, not satisfied with that, he followed me up to Meriden the next evening, and heard me again for the same purpose. Now, if this is so, it is to my mind very extraordinary. I have been sufficiently astonished at my success in the West. It has been most unexpected. But I had no thought of any marked success at the East, and least of all that I should draw out such commendations from literary and learned men !'

"'That suggests, Mr. Lincoln, an inquiry which has several times been upon my lips during this conversation. I want very much to know how you got this unusual power of "putting things." It must have been a matter of education. No man has it by nature alone. What has your education been ?'

"'Well, as to education, the newspapers are correct. I never went to school more than six months in my life. But, as you say, this must be a product of culture in some form. I have been putting the question you ask me to myself while you have been talking. I say this, that among my earliest recollections, I remember how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at anything else in my life. But that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbors talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings. I could not sleep, though I often tried to, when I got on such a hunt after an idea, until I had caught it ; and when I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over, until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has stuck by me, for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it north and bounded it

south and bounded it east and bounded it west. Perhaps that accounts for the characteristic you observe in my speeches, though I never put the two things together before.'" But to the speech itself.

FOURSCORE and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, —that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

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